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Russian Nationhood: A Revisionist Perspective with Observations from Narva (Estonia) and Moscow (Russia)

by

Michel Bouchard

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Anthropology

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 2003

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Jean DeBernardi

Mike Evans

Oleh Ilnytzkyj

Michelle Daveluy

John-Paul Himka

Petra Rethmann

Date approved: August 29, 2003

ABSTRACT

This thesis is proposing a revisionist account of nation, national identity and nationalism. I use the metaphor of curation to understand the process by which national identity emerges. I argue that the process of curation is not one of invention or imagination but one of reworking older cultures and communities in order to define nations that are recognizable to their nationals. I will also examine how ideas of nation and national identity are articulated locally and how the 'enigmatic Russian soul' is used in the daily agency of individuals. The Russian soul serves to distinguish Russians and Estonians and is used both to define communities and to shape expectations as to appropriate behaviour. Additionally, when it comes to the role of the state, I will argue that in Estonia the state is promoting a 'vertical mosaic'. Given that most Russians were disenfranchised and are not eligible to vote in national elections, few Russians are elected to the Estonian parliament. This absence of Russians in the political process has resulted in legislation and policies that disadvantaged ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers in the Estonian economy and labour market. Russians allege a purposeful "Estonification" that is seen as detrimental to their economic interests and this leads to growing resentment. I will also examine the way in which graveyards help to define a local 'homeland.' I argue that Narva is defined as a Russian city due to the presence of the graves of family members. The habitus of visiting graves takes on particular meaning in Narva as it is used as an expression of belonging and legitimization. The final major theme that I examine is the

significance of war memorials and memories of war in defining the Russians in Estonia as liberators as opposed to colonizers. In Russia, the memories of war have been curated in such a way as to promote a certain vision of the Russian people, a vision that is not shared by most Estonians. In this thesis, I have sought to analyze how Russians understand their own Russian nationality.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have many people to thank for the successful completion of this thesis.

Most of all, I am grateful to my wife, Arina, who stood by my side through the many years of research and writing. Whenever I was discouraged, she goaded me to continue, and I am grateful to her for all her help and most of all for her patience. The process was not easy, especially with two children, Isabelle and Gabriel, who sometimes resented the computer and the office where "papa" had to spend so much time at work busily writing and revising his work.

I will be eternally grateful to my supervisor and lifesaver, Jean DeBernardi. With her help and counsel, I was able to finish and successfully defend my thesis. It was a pleasure working with her, and I can only hope to continue collaborating with her in the future as a fellow colleague interested in ethnicity and nationhood.

I am also grateful to the committee members for their diligence. Mike Evans and Oleh Ilnytzkyj read drafts of the thesis with care and provided ample constructive feedback that greatly improved the thesis. I would also like to thank the others who participated at the defense and commented on the thesis, including Michelle Daveluy, John-Paul Himka, and Owen Beattie, who chaired the defense. I would also like to thank the external examiner, Petra Rethmann, for the questions and comments she provided.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my friends and colleagues at the University of Victoria, where I taught as a sessional instructor from 1999 to 2000, and at the University of Northern British Columbia, where I have been working since 2000. I would like to thank a number of individuals from these two institutions: Peter Stephenson, Andrea Walsh, April Nowell, Michael Asch, among others at the University of Victoria; and Wendy Aasen, Richard Lazenby, Farid Rahemtulla, Angèle Smith, and many others at UNBC. I would also like to thank two good friends, Patricia Spittal and Marc Pinkoski, who helped me through some challenging moments. David Steele, a graduate student at UNBC, did a wonderful job copy-editing the final version of the thesis, and I am especially grateful for the amazing work he did in a short period of time.

I must single out one close friend and colleague at UNBC for his help and support. Jim M^{c}Donald stood by me all these years as I was waiting to finish and defend my thesis. Where others may have lost hope, he always kept faith in; I am grateful to him and happy to say that, having completed the thesis, I will continue exploring questions of nationhood in future research and teaching at UNBC.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the funding sources that facilitated this research. These include the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, who granted me a two-year doctoral fellowship; the Canadian Circumpolar Institute, which provided a C-BAR grant that helped to fund my fieldwork; and the Estonian Studies Fund, which also contributed financially to the success of my doctoral studies.

I also would like to thank all the wonderful people in Narva who made my fieldwork experience such a pleasure. The hospitality of Narva's populace was tremendous, and

virtually no one, in spite of busy schedules, turned down my requests for interviews. I thank them for their generosity. I also thank Irina, who worked with me for a couple of months helping to arrange interviews, facilitate meetings, and—most importantly—transcribe interviews.

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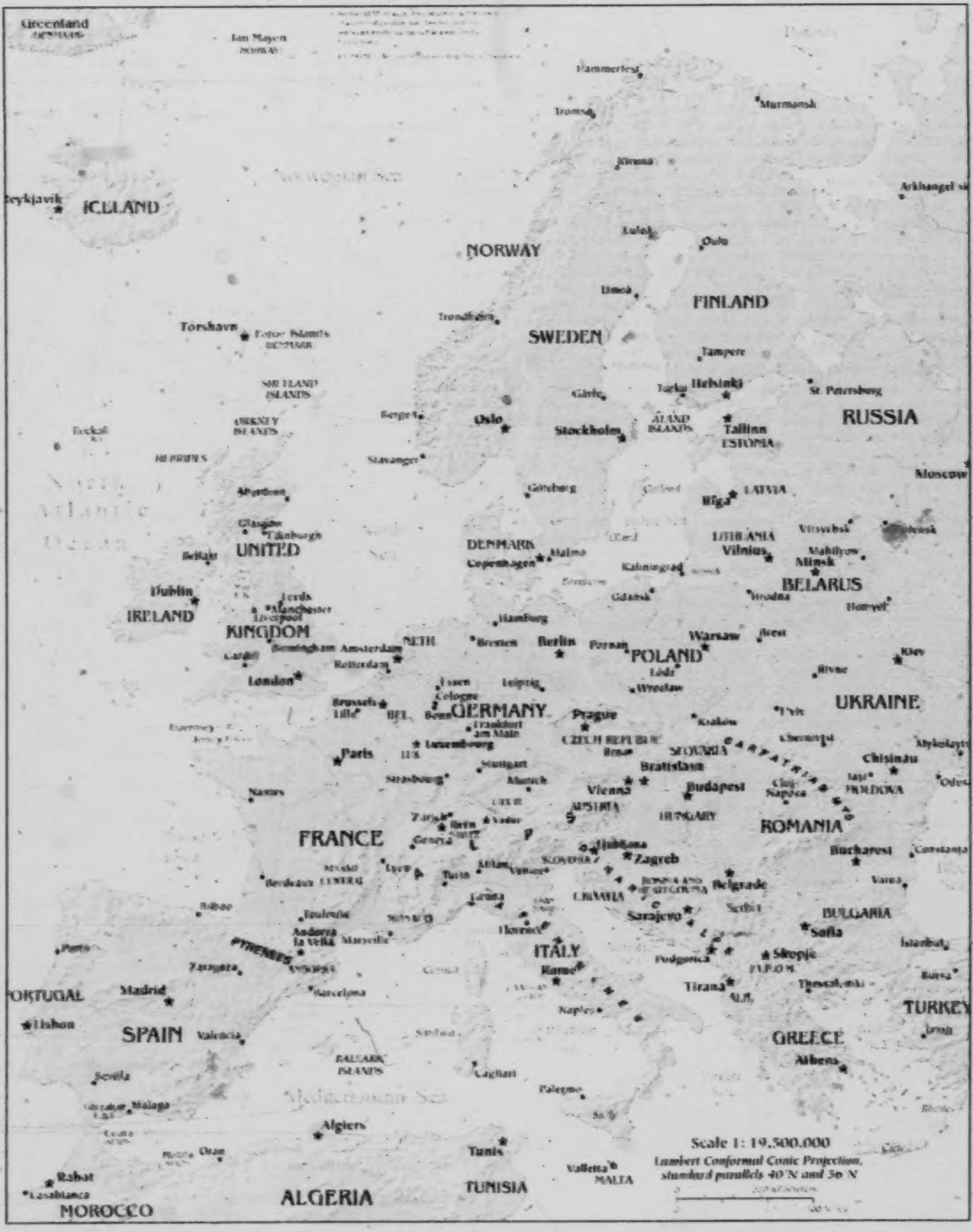
Europe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Lambert Conformal Conic Projection, standard parallels 40°N and 56°N

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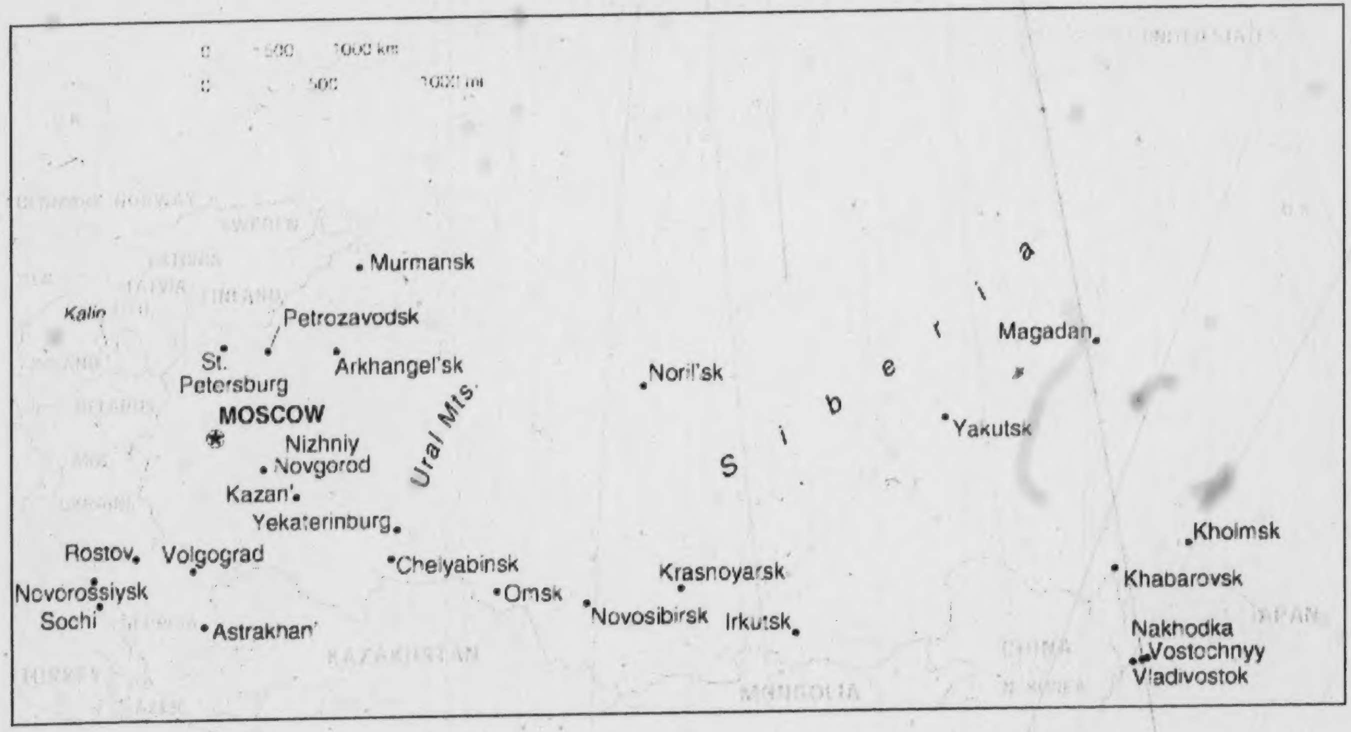
The Russian Federation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Volgograd
Novorossiysk
Sochi
Astraknan'
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Omsk
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Krasnoyarsk
Irkutsk
Siberia
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Magadan
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MONGOLIA
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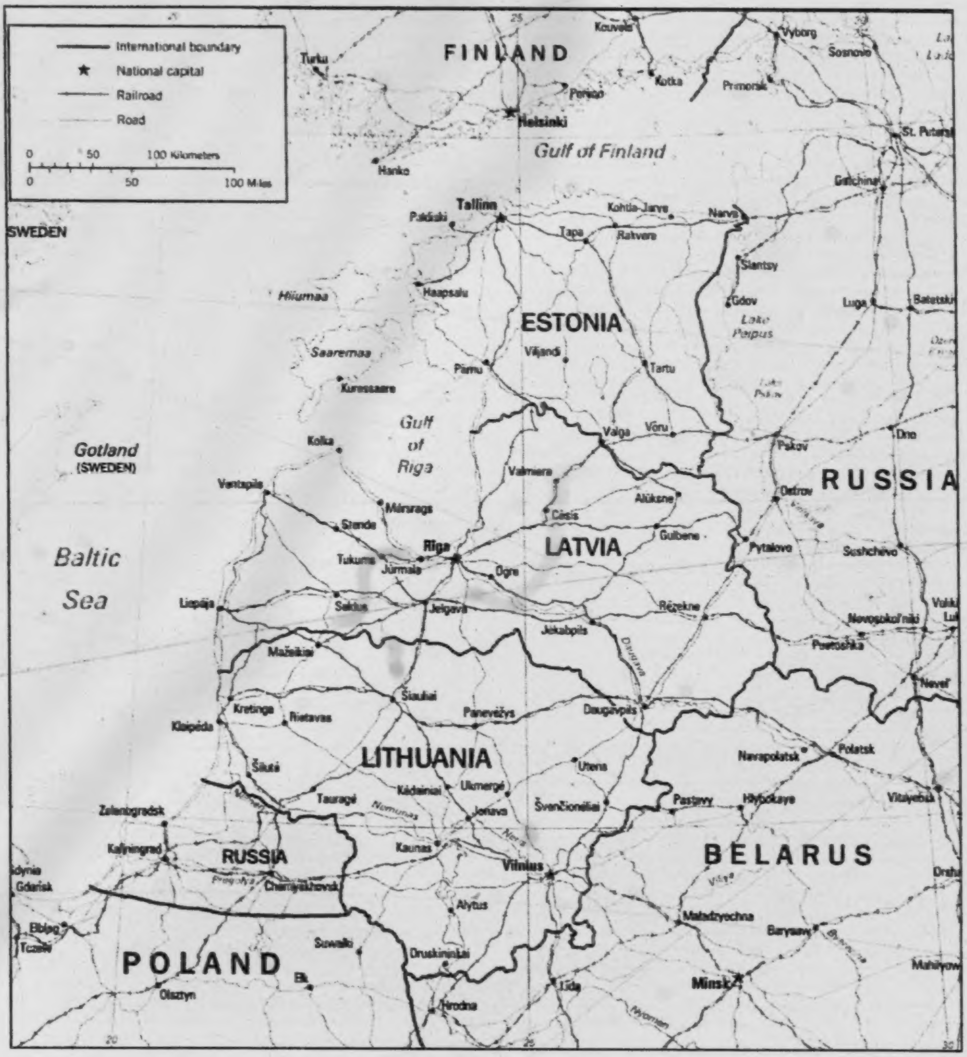
TURKEY

The Baltic States


International boundary
National capital
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Sosnovo
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Primorsk
Porvoo
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St. Petersburg
Hanko
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Tallinn
Paldiski
Kohtla-Jarve
Narva
Tapa
Rakvere
SWEDEN
Slantsy
Haapsalu
Gdov
Luga
Hiiumaa
ESTONIA
Lake Peipus
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Viljandi
Parnu
Tartu
Kuressaare
Gulf of Riga
Valga
Voru
Pskov
Dno
Gotland (SWEDEN)
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Valmiera
Ostrov
RUSSIA
Ventspils
Aluksne
Mersrags
Cesis
Stende
Gulbene
Riga
LATVIA
Pytalovo
Sushchevo
Baltic Sea
Tukums
Jurmala
Ogre
Liepaja
Saldus
Jelgava
Rezekne
Novosokol'niki
Jekabpils
Daugava
Pustoshka
Mazeikiai
Nevel'
Siauliai
Kretinga
Panevezys
Daugavpils
Rietavas
Klaipeda
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LITHUANIA
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RUSSIA
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Suwalki
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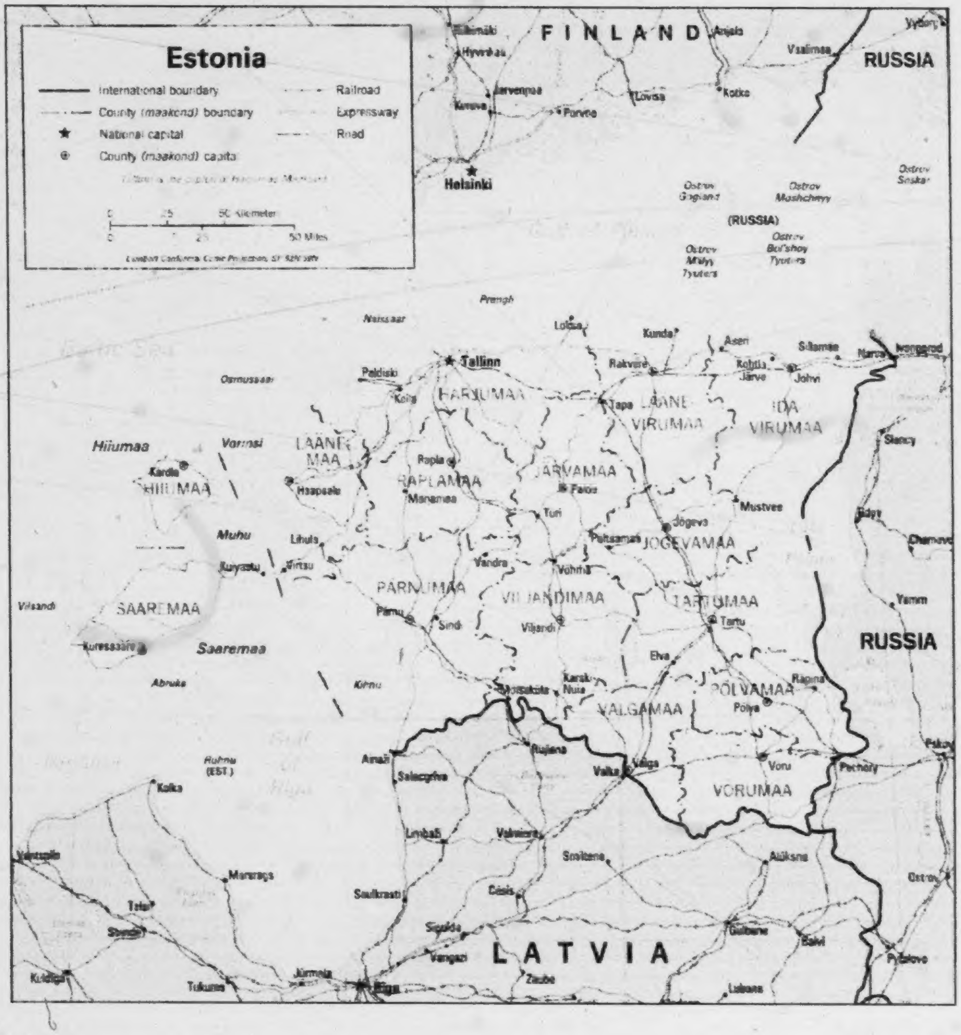
The Republic of Estonia


Estonia
International boundary
County (maakond) boundary
National capital
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Railroad
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RUSSIA
Helsinki
Porvoo
Loviisa
Kotka
Vyborg
Ostrov Gogland
Ostrov Moshchnyy
(RUSSIA)
Ostrov Bol'shoy Tyuters
Ostrov Malyy Tyuters
Ostrov Seskar
Prangli
Naissaar
Tallinn
Paldiski
Keila
Osmussaar
HARJUMAA
LÄÄNE-VIRUMAA
IDA-VIRUMAA
Rakvere
Kunda
Loksa
Tapa
Kohtla-Järve
Jõhvi
Sillamäe
Narva
Ivangorod
Slancy
Hiiumaa
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LÄÄNEMAA
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RAPLAMAA
Rapla
Märjamaa
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Vilsandi
SAAREMAA
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Abruka
PÄRNUMAA
Pärnu
Sindi
Vändra
Võhma
VILJANDIMAA
Viljandi
TARTUMAA
Tartu
Elva
Kihnu
Ruhnu (EST.)
Kolka
PÕLVAMAA
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Räpina
VALGAMAA
Karksi-Nuia
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Valka
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RUSSIA
Pskov
Gdov
Ikla
Ainaži
Rujiena
Salacgriva
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Valmiera
Smiltene
Alūksne
Ventspils
Talsi
Mazsalaca
Saulkrasti
Cēsis
Sigulda
Gulbene
Balvi
Vangaži
LATVIA
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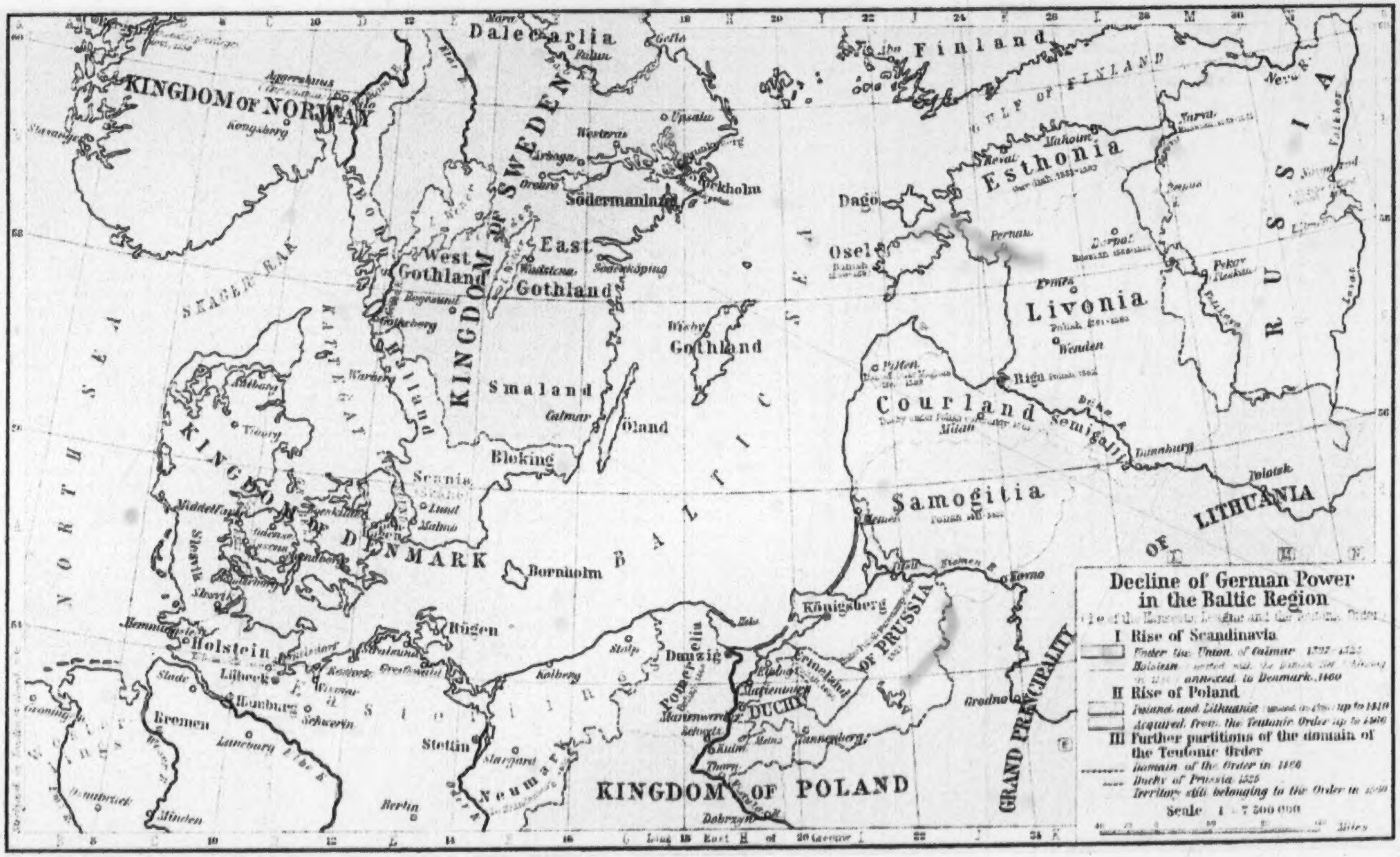
Tukums
Jurmala
Riga
Zaube
Lubana
Ostrov
Pytalovo

The Baltic World at the End of the 17th Century


KINGDOM OF NORWAY
Aggershuus
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Stavanger
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Gefle
KINGDOM OF SWEDEN
Upsala
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Södermanland
Stockholm
West Gothland
East Gothland
Wadstena
Söderköping
Gothenburg
Halland
Smaland
Calmar
Öland
Bleking
Scania
Lund
Malmo
Wisby
Gothland
Dago
Osel
Finland
GULF OF FINLAND
Esthonia
Reval
Narva
Pernau
Dorpat
Livonia
Wenden
Riga
Pskov
RUSSIA
Courland
Mitau
Semigallia
Dünaburg
Polotsk
Samogitia
LITHUANIA
GRAND PRINCIPALITY OF LITHUANIA
Kovno
Grodno
SKAGER RAK
KATTEGAT
NORTH SEA
BALTIC SEA
KINGDOM OF DENMARK
Aalborg
Viborg
Middelfart
Slesvig
Holstein
Lübeck
Hamburg
Wismar
Schwerin
Bremen
Luneburg
Minden
Rügen
Stralsund
Greifswald
Stettin
Stargard
Neumark
Berlin
Kolberg
Stolp
Pomerelia
Danzig
Marienburg
Marienwerder
Elbing
Ermeland
Königsberg
DUCHY OF PRUSSIA
Kulm
Thorn
Tannenberg
Dobrzyn
KINGDOM OF POLAND
Bornholm
Decline of German Power in the Baltic Region
I Rise of Scandinavia
Under the Union of Calmar
Holstein annexed to Denmark 1460
II Rise of Poland
Poland and Lithuania
Acquired from the Teutonic Order up to 1466
III Further partitions of the domain of the Teutonic Order
Domain of the Order in 1466
Duchy of Prussia 1525
Territory still belonging to the Order in
Scale 1 : 7 500 000
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Long East of Greenwich

Two Fortresses
An Introduction to the Russians from Narva

This thesis is a study of nation and nationality. I have sought to understand these terms through the anthropological practice of fieldwork—trying to comprehend the world from the point of view of Russians and Russian-speakers living in the city of Narva, located in the Estonian Republic on the banks of the Narva River and on the border of the Russian Federation. Before explaining why this particular city was chosen, reviewing relevant literature, and describing the methods used in this research, I think it is important to relate a bit of the history and the lay of the landscape of Narva. Two fortresses divided by a river dominate Narva's landscape. The imagery is stunning, too easy a metaphor to exploit: two nations separated by a river, as well as two civilizations—one Catholic (later Lutheran), the other Orthodox. True, the history is a bit more complex, but the geography—both physical and cultural—did shape the nations that were to emerge.

To the West, the Estonian nation came to be in the shadow of the Narva fortress. The fortresses were built by generations of colonizers—first Danes, then Germans—who dominated the Baltic region for centuries; the peasants who tilled the soil came to form, over time, the Estonian nation. I will be reviewing this history in more detail, but for now it suffices for me to state that although their

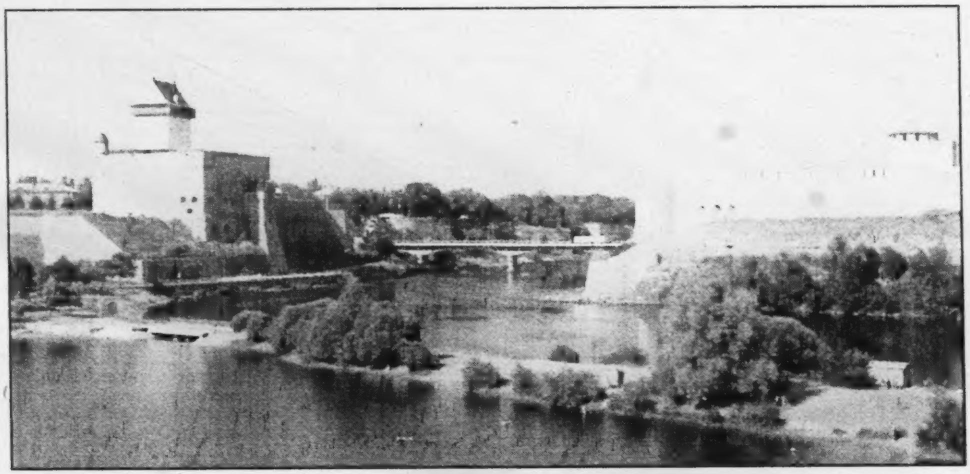

Figure 1: Two Fortresses

(Narva [Estonia] to the West; Ivangorod [Russia] to the East)

territories were conquered—on numerous occasions—Estonians maintained their language and culture. With the coming of the Luther's Reformation, the Estonians became literate, and their nation was awakened. The peasants eventually prevailed; the German nobility left the region and they have never returned.

To the East, another nationality moved northwards and pushed and assimilated the indigenes. Growing out of old Kievan Rus', this Slavic population came to be Russian. They pushed their way to the Narva River and established their fort in Ivangorod. Over the centuries, the growing empire to the East made its way West, and in 1704, the Narva fortress failed to stop them; Peter the Great took the city and eventually conquered the region. A trickle of Russian migrants moved into the region, but on the whole the Russian Empire was no more successful at assimilating the Estonian peasantry than was the German nobility; the Germans failed due to indifference, the Russians due to the late and halfhearted attempts of *Russification*. By the end of the 19th century, a nation had already emerged in Estonia, and the strength of the cultural traditions upon which the Estonian nation was founded—notably Protestant Bible literacy—easily resisted the dispirited attempts at *Russification* in the 1880s. Estonia came to be a nation-state with a small Russian minority before being conquered by the Soviet Union in the course of World War II. Following Estonia's integration into the Soviet Union, the occupation brought migrants to the regions, the growth of a sizable Russian minority in Estonia, and the establishment of a predominantly Russian population in Narva.

The Narva landscape symbolizes the territory that the nation had lost; though the fortress is located within the Estonian nation-state, the overwhelming majority of the local population is Russian, and the cityscape is dominated by Soviet architecture. The city is a strong symbol of the changes brought to the land by the Soviet administrators, as old Narva was destroyed by the Soviet Red Army and bulldozed by Soviet planners to make way for a new class of workers imported to the city from other Republics of the Soviet Union.

As is the case with most other historical fortresses in Estonia, a museum is located within Narva's fortress. The historical museums in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, define the Estonian nation, but in Narva's museum the city is defined as having been everything except Estonian. By chronicling the history of the Danes, Germans, Swedes, and various other peoples that possessed Narva at one time or another, the museum does not define Narva as Estonian from an ethnic perspective. Again, the displays in Narva depict the city as being positioned between greater empires that often vied for its possession. In this sense, the city does not belong to either Estonians or Russians, and recent immigrants are thus not alienated by Narva's history. If the city does not truly belong to anyone, it follows that it must belong to everyone. This serves as an example to show how the past is *curated* in order to define communities, as I will examine in greater detail later in this thesis.

I chose to conduct research in Narva because of the richness of its symbols, the region's history, and the nature of its population. Though located on the Russian border of the Estonian Republic, the city of Narva is predominantly Russian and Russian speaking; ethnic Estonians represent less than 5% of the city's population. Since the last Soviet census taken in 1989, the city's population had been falling quite drastically, but the ethnic makeup of the city remained largely stable. From a high of 84,975 in the 1989 census to less than 75,000 when I was conducting my research, the city's population dwindled to 68,680 residents at the time of the 2000 population census[1]. The drop in population would be the result of not only emigration, but of mortality rates exceeding birth rates. From the more accurate census figures of the year 2000 (as opposed to estimates of the population in 1997), the ethnic breakdown of Narva's population was as follows: 3331 Estonian; 58,702 Russian; 1774 Ukrainian; 1529 Byelorussian; 682 Finnish; 376 Tatar; 147 Latvian; 127 Polish; 89 Jewish; 141 Lithuanian; 218 German; 820 other ethnic nationalities; 744 ethnic nationality unknown. Ethnic Russians accounted for over 85% of the total population. The assimilative power of Russian is demonstrated in the number of people speaking Russian as their mother tongue; though 58,702 individuals classified themselves as ethnic Russian, 63,642 declared Russian as their mother tongue.

The social landscape was forever changed by the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Estonian Republic became an independent state in 1991 and then adopted citizenship laws that left the great majority of Russians—and others who were not ethnic Estonians—without any citizenship[2]. As I will examine in greater detail later, these individuals without citizenship could apply for residency in Estonia and then apply for citizenship, which entailed passing a language exam and other requirements. In certain cases, individuals could apply for a foreign citizenship while remaining residents of Estonia. A third option was simply to remain without citizenship and to apply for an Estonian "grey" passport—grey denoting the actual colour of the passport—which would provide identification for the individual and explain that they did not have any citizenship.

---

[1] All of the statistical data was gathered online from the Statistical Office of Estonia at http://www.stat.ee.

The land, then, was traditionally 'Estonian,' but the population is now Russian. Whereas the Russians were once the majority in the Soviet Union, they are now a minority in the Estonian Republic. And, while their language and culture were privileged during Soviet times as an 'international' language, Russians and Russian-speakers must now learn Estonian to work and to gain citizenship. Narva provides a unique locale to study what happens when majorities become minorities following the breakup of states.

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[2] By the time of the census in the year 2000, the majority of ethnic Russians were not citizens of Estonia. Of the 58,702 ethnic Russians, only 19,885 (34%) were citizens of Estonia; 20,716 (35%) had no citizenship ("citizenship undetermined"); 17,832 (30%) were citizens of the Russian Federation; 193 (0.3%) individuals reported their citizenship as unknown; and the remaining 76 (0.1%) were citizens of other countries, including two Belarus, two Finland, thirty one Latvia, seventeen Lithuania, twelve Ukraine, one Kazakhstan. Eleven more held dual citizenship (countries not specified). With the exception of ethnic Estonians, who were for the most part citizens of Estonia (3108 out of 3331 or 93%), and ethnic Finns, 394 out of 682 (58%) of whom were citizens, only a minority of individuals in the remaining ethnic groups were citizens of Estonia. Out of 5,221 individuals, 1,423 (27%) were citizens of Estonia, 1,937 (37%) had no citizenship, and 1,666 (32%) were citizens of Russia. The remaining 195 (4%) were citizens of another country, dual citizens, or their citizenship was not known. Of the remaining 744 residents of Narva in 2000 whose ethnic nationality was not known, only 154 (21%) were citizens of Estonia; 120 (16%) did not have any citizenship, 163 (22%) were citizens of Russia and the remainder either had a citizenship that was unknown (301 or 40%) or were citizens of another country (6 or 0.8%). These statistics, that can be obtained online from the Statistical Office of Estonia—http://www.stat.ee, testify to the fact that a minority of all the residents of Narva (36%) are not citizens of the state in which they live. This has a number of political and social consequences; only citizens can vote in republican elections, and only citizens can hold office in Narva's city council. These issues will be examined in greater detail later in the thesis.

The goal of the research was to better understand nationhood and, more precisely, Russian national identity. I spent close to a year conducting ethnographic research in Narva and Moscow in order to better understand what it means to be Russian. The research provided some insights that I had not expected when setting out to do the research. For example, the importance of graveyards in defining homeland was not something I had considered as a factor in defining identity and rooting populations in place. Also, though researchers allude to the 'Russian soul,' the power of this trope in shaping the agency of individuals and in defining the 'national habitus' exceeded all expectations. Likewise, the importance of the Great Patriotic War (World War II) as a defining moment for the Russian people, and the role of museums in *curating* nations, were things only identified in the field. Finally, the field data highlighted the ways in which states can be seen as privileging certain ethnic groups and promoting their economic interests to the detriment of other ethnic groups. The state is presented not as constructing nationalities, but rather as actively redistributing resources (jobs, financial assistance and other economic benefits) from one ethnic group to another; in promoting the state language and culture, the state favours those who speak the language and know the culture. In short, the research conducted served to ground the interplay of nationality, politics and economics in the field.

Definitions

Research into nations, national identity, and nationalism has become fashionable in recent years. A growing corpus of literature in the social sciences has dissected these phenomena and sought to understand what the nation is. The dominant school of thought in the last two decades has portrayed the nation based on invented traditions and imagined communities. Anthony D. Smith summarizes this school of thought succinctly:

> In the past two decades the idea of the nation as text to be narrated and an artifact and construct to be deconstructed has gained wide currency. For all its relativist and postmodernist subtexts, this remains essentially a modernist perspective and one that often has a post-Marxist lineage. At the same time, it seeks to go beyond modernism to encompass an era of 'postmodernity'; and because it sees nations and nationalism as phenomena intrinsic to modernity, it predicts the imminent demise of both as we move into a postmodern, global era (Smith 2000: 52).

By post-Marxist, Smith is clearly referring to the influence of Marxist theory on the leading modernist theoreticians; "print-capitalism" is central to Benedict Anderson's (1991) description of the origins of nation and nationalism, and Gellner (1983) describes the origins as a stage precipitated by changes in means and modes of production.

In spite of their Marxist roots, these theories have inspired 'postmodern' authors by questioning the existence of the 'reality' of the nation and suggesting that nations are created in discourse—in essence being nothing more than an empty signifier defined by states. As Eric Hobsbawm states, "In short, for the purposes of analysis nationalism comes before nations. Nations do not make states and nationalism but the other way round" (1992: 10). This mirrors Gellner who states that "Nationalism, which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: *that* is a reality" (1983: 48-49). Anderson equally refers to both nationality and nationalism as 'cultural artifacts' that were created at the end of the 18th century and cites the 'objective modernity of nations to the historian's eye' (1991: 4 and 5).

The modernity of the nation is central to these authors, as it provides legitimacy to the claim that the nation was constructed by states and imposed from above. This perspective is seen is the work of Miroslav Hroch (1985) who argues that elites play a pivotal role as imaginers, inventors, and constructors promoting national identities. Such research was followed by Rogers Brubaker's constructivist stance, and classified, according to Alexander Motyl, as form of 'extreme constructivism' (1999: 92). As cited by Alexander Motyl (1999: 92), Brubaker defines the task of the research in these terms:

> To argue against the realist and substantialist way of thinking about nations is not to dispute the reality of nationhood. It is rather to reconceptualize that reality. It is to decouple the study of nationhood and nationness from the study of nations as substantial entities, collectivities, or communities. It is to focus on nationness as a conceptual variable, to adopt J.P. Nettl's phrase, not on nations as real collectivities. It is to treat nation not as substance but as institutionalized form; not as collectivity but as practical category; not as entity but as contingent event. Only in this way can we capture the reality of nationhood and the real power of nationalism without invoking in our theories the very 'political fiction' of 'the nation' whose potency in practice we wish to explain (1996: 10).

Motyl is critical of Brubaker's extreme constructivism. He notes that "Variables, forms, categories, and events can be everything and they can be nothing" (1999: 92). Anthony Smith refers to Brubaker's insistence that the Soviet Union created nations as the "ultimate *reductio ad absurdum* of our inquiry" (2000: 57). Smith asks why the state should be accorded more substance and reality than the nation, and he notes that this constructivist approach misses the central point: historical nations are a powerfully felt and willed presence, their power derived from "the feeling shared among so many people of belonging to a transgenerational community of history and destiny" (2000: 57).

The study of Russian nationalism in Narva as a political movement would not have provided much detail, however. I discovered that classic nationalism—the belief that nation and state should coincide—was weak in Narva at the time I was conducting my research. True, there are certain individuals who are Russian nationalists, and who might want to see Narva eventually integrated into the Russian Federation; however, at this time, that point of view is quite marginal. Polls conducted in Narva indicate that the Russians overwhelmingly want the border to remain where it is now, and feel they can be Russian and live in an Estonian Republic. This is patently not nationalism, defined by Adrien Hastings as "deriving from the belief that one's own ethnic or national tradition is especially valuable and needs to be defended at almost any cost through creation or extension of its own nation-state" (1997: 4). Conversely, there *is* an Estonian nationalism: the language laws and the citizenship laws passed by Estonian legislators clearly intend to defend the Estonian nation. However, the Russians in Narva, even if they have a sense of national identity, do not necessarily want an independent Russian state carved out of Estonia. This does not mean that they will easily abandon their nationhood—not surprising, given the history of nationhood among Russians and the strength of the 'national habitus' in Narva, as will be examined in great detail later on.

In this thesis, I do not distinguish between nations and ethnic groups. Following Alexander Motyl's (1999) lead, I argue that ethnic groups and nations exist along the same continuum; this should not be surprising, as they are rooted in the same term, namely the Greek term *ethnos* and its Latin equivalent *gentes* (and its synonym *natio*). In this thesis, I argue that nations are not constructed by states, but rather are the product of social and political forces. The history of state formation is thus tied to, but different from, the history of nation formation. Russians in Narva can thus participate in a larger cultural community—the Russian nation—while being full citizens of the Estonian state. The Russians in Narva and the Russians in the city of Ivangorod, across the Narva River in the Russian Federation, share history, culture, language, and common definitions of nationhood. Russians on both sides of the border define being Russian in terms of the Russian soul and the Russian character. Both use terms such as *rodina* (homeland) to define their territory, and both participate in a number of common rituals and practices, such as visiting graveyards. Their political context, however, would be quite different; the Russians in Narva must adjust to the realities of being a minority in an Estonian nation-state, while the Russians in Narva must negotiate their future as living in the periphery of the Russian Federation. The Russians in Narva are living in a state that is striving to integrate—i.e. assimilate

—Russians and other minorities, whereas the Russians in Ivangorod do not have to worry about preserving their culture. In both locations, however, the nation and nationality will be negotiated and articulated in the local community; though the state does try to shape the meaning of nationhood, it is usually unsuccessful when trying to impose nationality. Indeed, it invariably adopts elements of local and regional identity when it pursues its nation-building project.

The work of Anthony D. Smith is quite useful in clarifying the terms nation, nationalism, and national identity. He defines the nation as "a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members" (1991: 14). Central to the nation are the bonds of solidarity and the shared myths, memories, and traditions. Smith distinguishes the nation from the state as the state refers to public institutions, whereas the nation "signifies a cultural and a political bond" (1991: 14). In this thesis, I have argued that the nation is *curated*, with nations being assembled from existing culture. This is supported by Smith's assertion that "the hold of the nation lies, as we shall see, partly in the promise of the nationalist salvation drama itself. But this power is often immeasurably increased by the living presence of traditions embodying memories, symbols, myths and values from much earlier epochs in the life of a population" (1991: 20). Later, Smith argues that in the postcolonial states, the creation of nations is less an act of invention than of 'reconstruction' of an ethnic core by shaping its culture to fit the requirements of a modern state (1991: 111).

He likens this to the process that was underway in the late medieval kingdoms in Europe.

Though the work of Anthony Smith is seen as being in opposition to the modernists, Adrian Hastings notes that Smith's *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986) "represents the strongest critique of modernism hitherto presented though it still accepts for too many modernist presuppositions" (1997: 8). Hastings' principal criticism of Smith is that he "refuses quite to grasp the nettle of medieval nations," as Smith wrote that there was a growing sense of national identity from the late 15th century. Hastings pushes the origins of English national identity 'beyond the watershed' of the 16th century (1997: 54). Nonetheless, Smith is perhaps not quite the 'modernist' Hastings accuses him of being. Rather, Smith provides a variety of terms to describe 'national' communities: the nation, the *ethnie*, and, in reference to much older forms of 'nation', the ethnic state. Smith, for example, characterizes ancient Egypt as an ethnic state rather than a nation. Also, with reference to England, Smith does recognize a much older process that involved in creating an English nation; he points out that "the centralizing Norman state and English Church did succeed in laying the foundations of a national culture and national identity quite early on, even if their full expression had to await the Tudor renaissance and Reformation" (1991: 57). In essence, what was missing in Smith's equation of nationhood was the "common public education system"—the main distinguishing feature in Smith's definitions of ethnie and nation (1991: 56).

Though Smith and Hastings share much more than they may acknowledge in press, the distinction between ethnic state, *ethnies*, and nations can be ambiguous, as the nation is quite often built upon pre-existing *ethnies*. Motyl, building upon Smith's work, collapses the distinction between *ethnies* and nations and proposes that there is "no meaningful difference between an ethnic group (or ethnie) and a nation. Both entities accept propositions about their place in history and draw boundaries" (1999: 78). He continues by emphasizing that all nations are ethnic nations, and argues that "Even if we conclude that nations are merely ethnic groups writ large or modern-day ethnic groups, we still posit a fundamental continuity that overrides whatever differences may emerge in the course of time" (1999: 78). Motyl does not accept a distinction between 'ethnic' and 'civic nations,' as "all nations stake out claims to a place in history and to certain boundaries, all national identities are exclusionary" (1999: 78). Motyl's definition of the nation allows for the reconciliation of the ideas put forward by both Anthony Smith and Adrian Hastings, without denying the role of mass education and other features of the modern state in facilitating (but not necessarily determining) the rise of nations.

The ideas put forward by Motyl also allow for the transcendence of the sterile dichotomy proposed between the 'good' constructivism and the 'bad' primordialism. Though not favouring a 'strong primordialism' in which nations (or any other community for that matter) would have unchanging essences and would have existed since time immemorial, primordialism has become a kind of modernist 'straw man,' as every author claims to discard 'primordialism' in developing their theory. Umut Özkirimli, in the work *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, presents primordialism as a 'paradigm,' an early 'umbrella' term used to describe scholars "who hold that nationality is a 'natural' part of human beings, as natural as speech, sight or smell, and that nations have existed since time immemorial" (2000: 64). Yet, Özkirimli cites only two alleged primordialists: Edward Shils (1957) and Clifford Geertz (1993). In spite of the alleged prevalence of primordialism, these two authors (and only these authors) are invariably cited as examples of primordialism.

If we examine the works of previous generations of anthropologists, it is clear that their analysis of culture and national identities is quite subtle. A case in point is Edward Sapir who, in the article "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" published in 1924, examines nationality in terms of 'national genius.' Moreover, his article is of particular interest here, as he examines Russian culture. Sapir is careful not to reify the 'genius' of a people, but rather defines it in terms of a historical development:

> Evidently, we are on peculiarly dangerous ground here. The current assumption that the so-called 'genius' of a people is ultimately reducible to certain inherent hereditary traits of a biological nature does not, for the most part, bear very serious examination. Frequently enough what is assumed to be an innate racial characteristic turns out on closer study to be the resultant of purely historical causes. A mode of thinking, a distinctive type of reaction, gets itself established, in the course of a complex historical development, as typical, as normal; it serves then as a model for the working over of new elements of civilization. From numerous examples of such distinctive modes of thinking or types of reaction a basic genius is abstracted. There need be no special quarrel with this conception of national genius so long as it is not worshiped as an irreducible psychological fetish. Ethnologists fight shy of broad

> generalizations and hazily defined concepts. They are therefore rather timid about operating with national spirits and geniuses (1924: 406).

Such ideas foreshadow the writings of Pierre Bourdieu and such concepts as habitus and doxa, ideas that will be used in successive chapters to analyze nation and nationality in Narva. Sapir also emphasizes the agency of individuals in stating, "A healthy national culture is never a passively accepted heritage from the past, but implies the creative participation of the members of the community; implies, in other words, the presence of cultured individuals" (1924: 417-418). Without individual agency and 'constant remodelling,' the national culture ceases to be genuine. Nonetheless, according to Sapir, it is not a creation *ex nihilo* (1924: 418).

Franz Boas shared a similar perspective in his analysis of nation and nationalism. Though hardly a constructivist, Boas conception of the nation is far from primordialist; he recognizes that nations emerged in history and did not exist from time immemorial. Boas demonstrates, for example, how nationalities are not communities of racial descent, and he raises the problems of using language—marked by a continuum of dialects—in defining nationality. Boas notes that "The transition of Italian into French is so gradual that only the political boundaries and the language imposed by Government, school and cultural relations determines whether we count a district as Italian or French" (1986[1928]: 92). He uses the term nationality to designate "a group the same in culture and speech without reference to political affiliation" (see Boas 1986[1928]: 82).

Boas recognizes the ambiguity of the terms nation and nationality. In the 1920s, nationality was used to signify both the citizens of a state and a linguistic and cultural group. Likewise, a nation was either a state or a collectivity comprised of members of a nationality (e.g. Italians and Germans before unification). The term nationalism was equally ambiguous, used to express feelings of solidarity and devotion to the interests of the state, as well as to designate the desire of a nationality that "feels its cultural unity for unity in political and economic organization" (Boas 1986[1928]: 82). As is the case with Sapir, Boas emphasises the activities of daily life in defining a nationality: "It is rather the community of emotional life that rises from our everyday habits, from the forms of thoughts, feelings, and actions, which constitute the medium in which every individual can unfold freely his activities" (1986[1928]: 92). Nevertheless, Boas did foreshadow contemporary scholars in that he recognizes the role of modernity in the creation of nations; he argues that the medieval period was not nationalistic and underlines the importance of the state. Boas states that "The growth of modern, powerful States is the condition for the development of a strong nationalism" (1986[1928]: 95).

The work of Boas differs from contemporary scholars in that he does not see the nation as created by states. He writes that "When [...] these limits are overstepped, and a fictitious racial or alleged national unit is set up that has no existence in actual conditions, the free unfolding of the mind, for which we are striving, is liable to become an excuse for ambitious lust for power" (1986[1928]:

94). He cites, for example, the Pan-Germanic wish to unite all the groups speaking Germanic languages, the Pan-Slavistic agitation, and the Pan-American idea. These movements could not succeed, as they created neither unified nations nor strong nationalism. Boas posits that "The nationalism of modern times presupposes that the group held together as a nationality has developed the desire to strengthen its common social life, to determine its own actions, in other words to become a nation which has the power to control its own destinies" (1986[1928]: 94). While nation is not primordial in Boas' description, nationality is not solely constructed by a state; moreover, the state is essential for a strong nationalism.

Motyl, in certain ways, returns to this richer tradition in the social sciences in proposing a 'weak primordialist' approach to the study of nations, national identity, and nationalism. He notes that there are many constructivist and primordialist approaches, and that the primordialist approaches differ from the constructivist because they contend that nations are not purposefully constructed by self-conscious nation builders; primordialists accept that nations could have emerged before Ernest Gellner's 'age of nationalism,' recognize that nations and national identities are not easily manipulated by elites, and conclude that they are more or less stable for these reasons (1999: 83-84). Motyl characterizes primordialism as extreme, strong, or weak. While he rejects extreme and strong primordialism that supposes the nation to be immutable and having existed since time immemorial, Motyl privileges weak primordialism—an approach that he defines as “a conceptualist enterprise that insists that nations are human collectivities that, as collections of conceptually delineated and thus stable properties, emerge whenever those defining characteristics come together” (1999: 94). He recognizes that nationalist elites, nationalist discourses, and industrial society are all facilitators, but though nations have clustered in modern times, there is no reason why nations could not have existed in the more distant past, as authors such as Smith (1991) and Hastings (1997) have recognized.

A return to Anthony D. Smith‘s analysis of national identity provides clues into the lack of a Russian nationalism in Narva. Smith points out how, “With rare exceptions, ethnic aspirations are at most ‘communal,’ in the sense of demanding a controlling voice for *ethnies* in cities and localities” (1991: 149). Take, for example, the way that Russians in Narva understand their relation to space and place. Russians in Narva define the city as Russian, as examined in the following chapter “Two Graveyards,” but their political aspirations are ‘communal’ in the sense that they are interested in improving the lives of Russians in Narva, but not reuifying politically with a Russian state. Russians in Narva seek Estonian citizenship, yet at the same time lobby to have their rights recognized—including cultural and language rights. The ideal situation—expressed quite frequently in the Russian-language press in Estonia—would be to have Estonia declared a bilingual state and thus recognize the use of both Estonian and Russian in those regions where Russians predominate.

This thesis proposes a revisionist account of nation, national identity, and nationalism. I use the metaphor of curation to understand the process by which national identity emerges. I argue for a form of 'weak primordialism' and propose that the process of curation is not one of invention or imagination, but one of reworking older cultures and communities in order to define nations that are recognizable to their nationals. I will also examine how ideas of nation and national identity are articulated locally and how the 'enigmatic Russian soul' is used in the daily agency of individuals. The Russian soul has meaning in that it defines relations between various national communities; it serves to distinguish Russians and Estonians and is used both to define communities and to shape expectations of appropriate behaviour. Additionally, I will argue that, in Estonia, the role of the state is to promote a 'vertical mosaic'. Given that most Russians were disenfranchised and are not eligible to vote in national elections, few Russians are elected to the Estonian parliament, and Russians do not participate in the full political process in Estonia. This absence of Russians in the political process has resulted in legislation and policies that disadvantaged ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers in the Estonian economy and labour market. Russians allege a purposeful 'Estonification' that is detrimental to their economic interests, leading to a growing resentment. I will also examine the way in which graveyards help to define a local 'homeland.' I argue that Narva is defined as a Russian city due to the presence of the graves of family members. The habitus of visiting graves takes on particular meaning in Narva, where it is used as an expression of belonging and legitimization. The final major theme that I examine is the significance of war memorials and memories of war in defining the Russians in Estonia as liberators as opposed to colonizers. In Russia, the memories of war have been curated in such a way as to promote a certain vision of the Russian people, a vision that is not shared by most Estonians. In this thesis, I have sought to analyze how Russians understand their own Russian nationality. I have also looked to the historical record to compare contemporary notions of nationality with older expressions of nationhood, and to understand the historicity of the Russian nation.

This research is founded on qualitative research, which will account for the particularities of the conclusions that I have reached. Even though much has been written on Narva's Russians, few scholars have pursued qualitative research among Russians. Those who have spent time in Narva (or other predominantly Russian cities or neighbourhoods) conducted survey research involving the distribution and collection of questionnaires (Kirch, 1997; D. Smith, 1998; G. Smith 1996 and 1998; Taagepera, 1993; Lauristin et al., 1997; Kirch and Kirch, 1995; Pettai, 1995; and Thompson, 1998). Rein Taagepera exemplifies the misrepresentation of Russians by Estonians. Taagepera, a Canadian citizen with Estonian origins living in the United States, authored *Estonia: Return to Independence*. In this account, Taagepera dehumanizes Russians as merely colonists by painting an ominous picture of the Russian colonist, thus reinforcing Estonian prejudices. The author states, for example, that "[the colonist] remained an alien who did not belong to that land" (Taagepera, 1993: 219). As David Smith has remarked, there is a tendency among Estonian nationalists to regard Russians as a "civil garrison of the empire" (1998: 6). Unfortunately, this perception seems to have coloured the views of both moderate Estonians and foreign researchers. Though the Russian-speakers in Estonia and elsewhere in the Soviet Union were structurally acting as a civil garrison, this is not the way in which Russians and other Russian-speakers define themselves. Their social narratives are much different in that they define Russians as liberators and collaborators rather than conquerors and occupiers.

Tipping or Ethnic Mobilization

Language, identity, and economic success are necessarily intertwined in modern states. David Laitin (1998), using game theory, argues that the economic advantages to be gained by assimilation will lead to an 'assimilation cascade' in which, over time, more Russians will speak the titular language, much to the detriment of their language of origin. Laitin defines the necessary context for such as cascade. He purports that "Assimilation cascades are likely to occur when the expected lifetime earnings of a young person are substantially greater when that person is fluent in the language of the state in which the family resides" (1998: 29). Other factors will either promote or restrain the expected cascade—factors which Laitin refers to as expected economic returns, in-group status, and out-group status (1998: 29). Laitin brings to game theory and the proposed assimilation cascade an American perspective; one of the examples he uses for his model is the rapid assimilation into the national language by immigrants to America, even in spite of the efforts of parents to try and maintain group solidarity[3]. He argues that the assimilation cascade commences as individuals begin to calculate the payoffs of learning the titular language (and presumably the costs of maintaining the Russian language) and conclude that there are benefits to assimilation. The state assists this process, as "state policies on education and administration have discernible effects on individual incentives and can certainly induce a few Russians to shift their linguistic repertoires" (1998: 29). Laitin cites how the 'nationalizing state' (a term borrowed from Brubaker 1996) provides new categories of remunerative jobs to those who speak the state language well, and he cites as one example the Estonian state's policy of paying higher wages to teachers of Estonian language in Russian schools in Narva (see Laitin 1998: 116). In addition, the state creates barriers to monolingual Russians as they try to enter the workforce. Laitin then speculates that a 'tipping point' will eventually be reached, whereby increasing numbers switch to the 'practices of dominant society,' leading to what he calls 'societal assimilation' as opposed to 'individual assimilation' (see Laitin 1998: 30).

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[3] Laitin seems to have been influenced by his family's experience. The dedication of his book is to his maternal grandmother, who immigrated to America from the Russian Empire. Though she was not an ethnic Russian, she yearned to become Russian. He recounts how her daughters were "overwhelmed by the need to conform to the local scene, and they humiliated her into becoming an American" (1998: vi). He then finishes the dedication by stating, "Whatever insight there is in this volume on the pains and payoffs to assimilation I owe to my Grandma Anna" (1998: vi).

David Laitin applies this theory to the Russian Diaspora in four countries: Estonia, Latvia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. According to Laitin, "This book takes several hefty jumps into the rarefied atmosphere of theory—especially as the tipping game is developed—but it does so in a way that is grounded in the lives of real people" (1998: 33). Laitin's work is not a sociolinguistic account of linguistic assimilation as the title, *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*, suggests. Laitin states in the first page of the preface to the book that "the Russian-speakers in the post-Soviet republics are facing a radical crisis of identity" (1998: ix). This 'crisis of identity' is conjectured due to the political upheavals that shook the region; identity is in question because Russian-speakers are located in new 'nationalizing states,' and, as a constructivist, Laitin places great importance on the state as a contributing factor in the construction of identity. The basic premise of the book is that the term 'Russian-speaking population' is an 'emergent nationality category' (see Laitin 1998: 268). He identifies that "A recurrent theme in this book is that the 'Russian-speaking population' in the near abroad is developing a new corporate identity that has within it the possibility of evolving into a national group. If this is correct, then we should be able to observe trends in Russian nationalism in Russia that are distinct from the trends of nationalism in the near abroad" (1998: 300). He argues that "the nationalist discourse in the near abroad has focused on the Russian language as the essential element of Russianness, and thereby has been more inclusive. Its point of concern is how to define themselves as a group—as a

Diaspora, as people without a country, or as normal minorities within legitimate nation-states" (1998: 321). It follows that this will be done through a new nationality.

Though Laitin conducted fieldwork in Narva, our analysis diverges in the meaning attributed to the term 'Russian-speaker'. Whereas Laitin proposes this as an emergent nationality, my observations are that it is a form of shorthand used to unite a variety of nationalities under an umbrella term without supplanting pre-existing nationalities. In one interview, for example, the speaker used 'Russian-speaker' at the beginning of the sentence, yet finished by simply switching to 'Russian,' indicating that this term was more 'natural' and closer to the individual's identity—though Laitin claims the reverse (see 1998: 191). In fact, Laitin's writings seem to contradict some of his own conclusions. He observes: "Our interviews demonstrate that 'Russian' is by no means lost as a category for national identification for nearly all nontitulars in the former union republics. They further demonstrate that the tenacity of passport nationalities remains strong, and many of our informants see those categories, ultimately as 'really real,' to use an expression of Clifford Geertz"(Laitin 1998: 191).

In this thesis, I will argue that nationality is articulated locally through individual agency and examine how individuals—both Russians and Estonians—use the 'Russian soul' to mark (and maintain) group boundaries. Though Laitin does not examine this phenomenon in depth, his work suggests that he too encountered such practices in Estonia:

> The leading Estonian pollster, Andrus Saar, in a private conversation, picked up on these subtle differences. Russians, he observed, do not understand 'the Estonian sense of reserve, privacy, keeping one's personal distance. Estonians simply withdraw when they are in a group of Russians.' From the Russian side, a mirror discourse is often heard. Nina Sepp, who is linguistically assimilated, holds that the Orthodox tradition lies deep, and thus she has 'confidence in the unbreakability of the Russian soul, that can withstand the loss of religion and change in language' (1998: 159).

There is not only a maintenance of national identity—as Laitin has stated, national categories are seen as 'really real'—but also a mutual segregation of the populations themselves. He cites the case of a young Estonian living in a predominantly Russian neighbourhood in Tallinn who does not interact with other local children 'due to different values' (Laitin 1998: 130).

Laitin (1998) is not alone in proposing the primacy of the political in the formation of identities. Neil Melvin, author of *Russians Beyond Russia: The Politics of National Identity,* proposes, as the title suggests, that political forces shape national identity. He argues, using Anthony D. Smith's terminology, that prior to the Russian Revolution, Russians could not be considered an *ethnie*, but rather were barely an *ethnic category*, "a separate cultural and historical grouping with little self-awareness and only a dim consciousness that they form a separate collectivity" (Melvin 1995: 125). Not only were Russians not an *ethnie* prior to the Revolution, but "even in the late 1980s Russians remained ethnically unconsolidated" (Melvin 1995: 125). Melvin's approach differs from Laitin somewhat in that he argues that, as a consequence of Russian politics, "the

Russian-speaking settler communities have, for the first time, begun to think of themselves as members of the Russian nation and of the Russian Federation as their homeland" (1995: 127). These conclusions are not supported by the evidence that has been put forward in chapter five on the Russian soul; the proverbs and sayings collected by Vladimir Dahl clearly suggest that, at the very minimum, Russians had a strong sense of ethnicity and were conscious of having a Russian identity; additionally, ethnographic data collected in Narva suggests that the Russians of this location consider Narva as their homeland, not the Russian Federation.

In this thesis, I concur with Partha Chatterjee's assertion that "we have all taken the claims of nationalism to be a *political* movement much too literally and much too seriously" (1993: 5). In this instance, Chatterjee is criticizing Anderson's proposition that nationalism was imposed as a 'modular' form imported from Europe and the Americas. According to Chatterjee, "The most powerful as well as the most creative results of the nationalist imagination in Asia and Africa are posited not on an identity but rather on a *difference* with the 'modular' forms of this national society propagated by the modern West" (1993: 5). Though Chatterjee closely examines nationalism in India, his work provides valuable insight to understanding nationalism in that he sees it not solely as a political movement, but as a cultural one as well. As he notes, the history of Indian nationalism begins with the movement to create a 'national culture,' followed by the political movement to create an independent state free from colonial rule (see Chatterjee 1993: 6).

As Chatterjee questions the imposition of 'modular' nationalism onto postcolonial realities, the question also remains as to whether American models of immigrant 'integration' can be transposed onto Eastern European realities. We may question the optimism of Laitin's model of 'assimilation cascades' when applied to Estonia. In this regard, Stanley Tambiah's observations are apropos; he feels that "The optimism of sociologists, political scientists, and anthropologists who naively foretold the impending onset of the 'integrative revolution' and inevitable decline of 'primordial loyalties' such as kinship, caste, and ethnicity in third world countries has by now waned and dimmed with disenchantment" (1994: 430). The strength and resilience of ethnicity stems from its ability to replace class conflict as a paradigm for interpreting social change and conflict by allowing for political mobilization. Also, there are certain parallels between the states of the third world and the 'postsocialist' states in that the state can channel resources to one ethnic group as opposed to another. "Moreover," Tambiah writes, "if in the past we typically viewed an ethnic group as a subgroup of a larger society, today we are also faced with instances of majority ethnic groups with a polity or nation exercising preferential or 'affirmative' policies on the basis of that majority status" (1994: 431). As shall be demonstrated, the perception of Russians and Russian-speakers in Narva is that the state privileges the dominant ethnic group, the Estonians, to the Russians' detriment. This privileging is achieved through language legislation, which Tambiah describes in terms of a 'zero-sum' game of redistribution that will create winners and losers. He states, "The entitlement claims of rewards equalization are contentiously sought through a privileged use of one language, or the imposition of special quotas providing privileged access to higher education, job opportunities, and business entrepreneurship" (1994: 437). Laitin's game theory assumes that once they have assimilated, Russians will face no barriers; however, this is not what Russians expect will happen. As related by Laitin, one such Russian, who plans to study law at the University of Tartu, believes "Russians are discriminated against, by their names, their accents, or their looks" (1998: 125). Assimilation does not guarantee the end of the politics of ethnicity. Citing Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan (1975: 10), Tambiah notes that "the resources of the modern state inevitably in turn reinforces and maintains ethnic political machinery—patron/client networks, bossism, and patronage structures—through which affirmative actions or pork-barrel distributions are dispensed" (1994: 436). What often results is an 'asymmetrical incorporation,' or—to use terminology developed in the Canadian context—the creation of a 'vertical mosaic' (see Porter 1965).

The loss of language does not necessarily entail the end of group identity, let alone the loss of national identity. As John Edwards notes, "A 'cultural loyalty' is often more widespread than a narrower 'language loyalty'" (1994: 112). The importance of language stems not only from its communicative importance, but also from its value as a ‘symbol’. Edwards, a sociolinguist, underlines that “large socioeconomic factors can often influence language decline indirectly, through such things as speakers’ attitudes and loyalties and this fact suggests a more subtle operation of that influence than some oversimple ‘selling-out’ process” (1994: 117). Edwards agrees that there are thresholds below which languages cannot survive; however, this ‘magic threshold’ is yet undiscovered. Estonian Russians have a high degree of ‘*institutional completedness*,’ which should ensure the long-term survival of the Russian language (see Breton 1964). The biggest threat to this language is Estonia’s planned phasing out of Russian-language schools; however, the implementation of such policies risk engendering ethnic conflict, as Russians and Russians-speakers may object to such policies.

The Economics of Ethnicity

There are certain essential realities that cannot be ignored in everyday life, and one of these is the economic inequality that invariably exists between demographically proximate ethnic groups. Canadian researchers have a somewhat privileged position when it comes to analyzing the issue of ethnicity and social stratification, as we benefit from the publication of John Porter’s *Vertical Mosaic* in 1965. In this seminal work, Porter argues that ethnic groups are hierarchically organized with respect to class and power. In recent years, various researchers have reevaluated and critiqued Porter’s analysis, but some published research indicates that there still exists a vertical mosaic, with visible minorities—all things being equal—earning less than their typically "white" compatriots, although inequality has admittedly declined in the past decades.[4] Research indicates, for example, that the attainment of higher education generally leads to relatively greater economic rewards for men and women of British descent (Gosine 2000: 90). Such research led Geschwender and Guppy to conclude that "the vertical mosaic has not so much collapsed, as has been rearranged" (1995: 82).

The drastic changes in the vertical mosaic since the 1960s are largely due to the role of institutions, particularly their influence on social facts. Though French-speakers in Canada prior to the 1960s had been concentrated in less prestigious occupations, this changed with the development of a public school system in Quebec and New Brunswick. With these two provinces promoting better education for French-speakers, along with modernization and the growing role of provincially funded public institutions such as hospitals, French-speakers could more easily gain access to new, prestigious occupations. This was especially true in the civil service, where these provinces—to varying degrees and at different times—promoted the hiring of French-speaking civil servants (Langlois *in press* :88). The provincial government played an important role in promoting the social mobility of French-speakers; it endeavoured to create an employment environment in which the French language would be the primary language of work and social mobility. Likewise, the provincial government encouraged the development of a new class of French-speaking business leaders and entrepreneurs; the end result was a diminishment of the gap separating Anglophone and Francophone (Langlois *in press*: 91).

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[4] Supported in Breton 1998; Curtis 1993; Driedger 1996; Elliott 1992; Geschwender 1995; Gosine 2000; Lian 1998; Nakhaie 1998; Pineo 1985; Reitz 1997; Simmons 1998; and Wong 1998.

The lesson to be drawn from an examination of the case of Québec is that states are not neutral when it comes to the allocation of economic resources within a given society; in fact, the laws of a state can quite clearly favour members of certain ethnic groups. The Western Canadian Prairie Provinces provide a telling example of how ethnic stratification can result from government policies. Provinces such as Alberta passed laws at the end of the nineteenth century making English the only official language of the legislature and the courts. Although such laws were not specifically intended to favour the economic prospects of ethnic English, people of British descent who spoke the official language—people who were also familiar with the workings of British institutions—were the ones who naturally obtained jobs in the civil service and high-ranking positions in the Private sector.

On a broader scale, the decline of historical materialism essentially muted the study of inequality from a material perspective and has problematised the study of stratification. Floya Anthias notes that postmodern theory, in its critique of essentialist notions, dismantles the idea of 'social' and the corresponding view of society as a network systems and practices articulated around a set of defining elements (2001: 836). Likewise, globalization theory constructs new social forms that are thought to override the older divisions of class, ethnicity, and gender

(Anthias 2001: 836). A study of class would thus be centred on the organization and production of economic resources, whereas ethnicity would produce or reproduce social bonds relating to origin or cultural difference; as Anthias recognizes, the two are quite often interrelated (2001: 844). Social stratification and 'hierarchization' involve unequal resource distribution— resources that can be of either an economic/material nature (money and goods for example), or of a symbolic/cultural nature, such that dominant groups within the state have cultural production privileges (Anthias 2001: 845). Anthias is careful not to define class as economic and ethnicity as cultural, as this is the result of a tautology. The role of the state cannot be downplayed. As Anthias states, "unequal power relations, particularly vis-à-vis the state (and in the actions of the state, such as the police force), produce material effects even where no explicit intentionalities around racism or sexism can be identified" (2001: 852).

The decline of a class-based approach to ethnicity and stratification has meant that many important considerations have been overlooked in the study of ethnicity and nationalism. These oversights include the examination of resource competition, the patterns by which ethnic groups are integrated into society, and the role of the state in the first two processes. As Reed Coughlan and S.W.R. de A. Samarasinghe review in their introduction to *Economic Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict*, competition over control of political power embodied in the state is quite often an arena of intense rivalry between ethnic groups; they argue that control of political power is translated into influence over the distribution of economic resources (1991: 6). The economic imperatives of political mobilization have largely been overlooked or downplayed when examining the postsocialist states of Eastern Europe.

Fieldwork and research methods

The goal of my fieldwork was to study the Russian-speaking population of Narva. Quite obviously, the point of view of Russians and Russian-speakers in Narva is much different from that of Estonians in Narva and especially Estonians located elsewhere in the Estonian Republic. I am not interested in 'proving' the merits of one point of view or another. I cannot, however, ignore the fact that changes in Estonia since the fall of the communist regime are seen as beneficial to certain segments of Estonian society and detrimental to others. This fact has already been recognized by Estonian researchers. To cite Marju Lauristin and Peeter Vihalemm: "More than could be expected in a successfully reforming country, divisions between losers and winners in Estonia were creating the image that some social groups, such as middle-aged and older women and the inhabitants of certain regions or ethnic minorities, were destined to become losers" (1997: 109). If the Russian-speaking population comes to see itself as losing out in the transition from Communist to Capitalist, there is a risk of poisoning ethnic relations for generations to come. As Ronald Suny's concluding remark in *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* points out, "How those states will continue the building of their nations, whether as democratic or authoritarian, shaped by tolerant and inclusive or chauvinistic and exclusivist discourses, remains the great open question of our time" (1993: 160).

In the Estonian case, the conflict surrounds the definition of tolerant and inclusive. Some Russian-speakers will see certain state policies as chauvinistic and discriminatory, whereas Estonian politicians may describe these same policies as examples of tolerance. Researchers will have equal difficulty coming to an agreement as to what is appropriate and what is not. Marju Lauristin and Peeter Vihalemm, for example, cite two other researchers who have criticized the policies of the Estonian government as being too exclusionist (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 427 in Lauristin and Vihalemm, 1997: 111). As Lauristin and Vihalemm point out, "However, one has to recognize that despite the pressures from both extremes, the practical outcomes of this policy have been a quite balanced trade-off between the interests of Estonians and non-Estonians" (1997: 111). As I do not wish to enter this fray, I will try to avoid making value judgments as to the policies adopted by the Estonian government. Not having thoroughly analyzed these policies and the Estonian political discourse, I am not well placed to provide a critique of Estonian national policies. Also, not having conducted a statistical analysis of the relative change in social status and the ranking of Estonian and Russian-speakers, I will be unable to provide a final judgment as to who is right. In any case, it has been my experience living in Canada that such debates end up being quite sterile. Instead, I wish to focus on presenting the points of view of many Russian-speakers in Narva and how they understand the political and economic evolution of Estonian society.

I lived in Tallinn, Narva, and Moscow for close to a year during 1997. In the course of my fieldwork, I interviewed approximately eighty individuals, trying to choose a wide variety of individuals from various walks of life. I interviewed a number of different "nationalities[5]"—approximately 10 individuals, including Russians, Estonians, Germans, Jews, and Moldavians[6]. I interviewed roughly an equal number of women and men and tried to select individuals from different age groups. Since I was interested in meeting individuals in positions of power and prestige, I did not rely on a random sample, but rather on a "snowball" approach; individuals would recommend other individuals, thus increasing my contacts until I had a respectable corpus of interviewees. I also interviewed people's neighbours and some of their friends and acquaintances. Nonetheless, I did strive to select people at random by simply knocking on doors and greeting people in public areas. I quit interviewing when I was satisfied that my informants had provided an adequate enough divergence of points of view to be able to extrapolate an overview of the dominant discourses present in Narva.

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[5] Russians largely define nationality on the basis of "blood". A Russian is an individual who has Russian ancestry. It should not be confused with citizenship. It does pose some difficulties to a researcher, since it is necessary to define your citizenship. In my case, Canadian is not seen as a legitimate "nationality" and French-Canadian is not entirely comprehensible. I settled on "Frantsuz" (French) while I was doing my research. I was fortunate that the French nationality is seen in a positive light by Russians.

[6] During Soviet times, these nationalities were recorded in the internal passport, and a person was permitted only one nationality. At first there was certain flexibility, but later an individual had to choose from his parent's nationalities. Often, if a choice was possible, parents avoided giving their children a stigmatized nationality. One of my informants, a woman with a German father and Russian mother, had the Russian nationality inscribed in her passport, because her father, who had suffered greatly during the war because of his German nationality, insisted that she be recorded as a Russian in her passport. He simply did not want his daughter to suffer as he had in the past. The same is also true for the Jewish nationality: when it was possible to choose, most individuals preferred to be registered as Russian. In Narva, there are allegedly seventeen nationalities.

The main method used during the interview process was the semi-directed interview. As the goal of the semi-directed interview is to approximate a conversation—one that is guided by topics of interest—I had a limited number of questions that I used in the course of the interview. There were certain topics that were common to all whom I interviewed, such as the meaning and significance of the Russian soul, and later in my fieldwork I added questions pertaining to graveyards and mortuary rituals. In my interview sample, I had representatives of Narva's political, cultural, and social elite, including the mayor of Narva, leading industrialists, journalists, union leaders, Russian Orthodox priests, and many others. When interviewing such individuals, we would explore topics in which they had knowledge, expertise, and a unique perspective that would not be shared by others; in an interview with one of Narva's Russian Orthodox priest, we discussed issues of religion, faith, and social change, but when interviewing the mayor, we discussed local politics and the challenges faced by Narva in the future. All the interviews were conducted solely in Russian, as I was sufficiently fluent in this language to follow a conversation and lead interviews by the end of my fieldwork.

While conducting my fieldwork, I also collected a variety of documents, notably newspaper articles. I reviewed the major Russian language newspapers in order to amass a chronicle of recent events and how they were presented in the Russian-language press. I analyzed these in order to gain an understanding of how Russians from Narva see themselves. I also bought a variety of books that were readily available in Estonia.

Finally, a large part of my research involved familiarizing myself with the everyday life of the residents of Narva. I lived basically as they did; I rented an apartment, shopped at the market, and conducted my day-to-day life in Narva. I tried to practice 'participant-observation.' It is evident that participant-observation is much more difficult in a large urban setting. Narva, though a small city, still had a population of 70,000 people. I could not readily participate in the work being done in a factory, for example; nonetheless, I did try to participate as much as I could in the community. I made several good friends and shared much with them. Finally, the research involved visiting museums, graveyards, monuments, and various other public locales that were part of the familiar Narva landscape.

Thesis Overview

The first chapter, "From Crusade to Independence: A History of Estonia and Baltic Nationhood," examines the history of Estonia both to provide the necessary historical context and as a means of evaluating contemporary nationalism theory. Of particular interest is the history of literacy in Estonia. The spread of literacy in Estonia forces a reevaluation of the ways in which literacy is achieved and sheds light into the importance of Lutheranism and Bible literacy in promoting literacy and in the creation of a literate market for the products of "print-capitalism." It will be demonstrated that the translation of religious texts into Estonian fostered the consolidation of Estonian dialects into two written vernaculars, and that the 'national awakeners' simply chose one of the written vernaculars and expanded this language to accommodate the needs of a modern and secular society. This Bible literacy supports Hastings' assertion that the Bible was central to the promotion of nationhood, as it provided a 'mirror' for incipient nations. Further research in Estonia will clarify the importance of Biblical literacy in promoting the concept of nationhood in the Estonian vernacular.

In the next chapter, "The Nation on Display: Curating Nationhood," I propose that nations are *curated* by selecting and standardizing culture and by promoting a common national culture. For Estonians, folklore and folk dress were used prominently in *curating* nations, buoying the role of national language and literature in facilitating the emergence of an Estonian national identity. For Russians, war memorials and museums are central to curating Russian nationhood, and I will analyze this in detail in the third chapter "The Great Patriotic War: Two Perspective of the Past." World War II defined the Russian people and presents the Red Army as liberators. Russian narratives of 'liberation' are opposed to Estonian depictions of Russians as colonizers.

The fourth chapter, "The Political and Economic Situation of the Russians in Narva and Estonia," is rather self-explanatory in its primary scope. Additionaly, this chapter will examine some of the theories predominating the study of the Russian Diaspora. Rather than seeing the state as constructing national identity, I will argue that the state is not a neutral agent, but can serve to redistribute economic resources in such a way that favors the economic interests of certain groups in society, notably by promoting the economic interests of certain ethnic groups. In the case of a multiethnic country, the state can promote measures that favour the economic and material interests of majorities through such measures as the adoption of official languages and the setting of state policy to the advantage of one nationality. There is evidence that the Russians are the 'losers' of the past decade's legal and economic reforms; Russians are falling behind in terms of material prosperity as compared to the dominant ethnic Estonian population. Russians in Narva interpret state actions as a form of

'Estonification' that serves to promote the interests of ethnic Estonians. This chapter will review the important pieces of legislation that the government passed and will examine how the disenfranchisement of most Russians muted their political voice and facilitated the adoption of legislation that ran counter to Russian interests.

The fifth chapter, "Aspects of National and Cultural Identity: Conceptualizing the Russian Soul," examines the cognitive and social landscape. In the same way that museums help to define the nation, the notion of a national soul defines a 'national habitus' that can then be used in the agency of individuals. The Russian soul is important in that it helps to define Russian nationality on the ground in local communities. It is such a familiar part of the cognitive landscape that it is taken for granted. Nonetheless, it shapes behaviour and expectations. The clichéd Russian soul defines normative behaviour both for Russians and Estonians. Both are classified according the characteristics that the soul bestows on nationals.

The sixth chapter, "Two Graveyards," demonstrates how a very specific feature of the landscape also defines the past; graveyards help define the past, culture, and geography in relation to a specific people. The past that is defined is much more personal in nature—the history of a particular family. Graveyards also define belonging; the *Rodina*, or homeland, is defined in part as the place where one's parents are buried. The symbolism associated with graveyards parallels what was observed at war memorials. Graveyards are a part of the landscape used to commemorate lives lost, as were the war memorials analyzed in chapter three, and many rituals are equated with both types of monuments. The war memorials also help vindicate the Russians of Narva; they do not see themselves as occupiers, but as liberators. This view colours their perception of recent history. They refuse to accept the dominant Estonian discourse that defines them as illegal immigrants; rather, they continue to visit both war memorials and graveyards, thereby reinforcing their attachment to Narva. Graveyards serve to define Narva as a Russian homeland.

Together, these chapters seek to provide new insights into Russian nationhood and nationalism. It is not nationalism writ large, but the nationalism of home and hearth. Or, to use Russian terms, it is the nationalism of the *malaya Rodina*, the 'small homeland.' The *malaya Rodina* is understood to be the place where one grew up, one's apartment, one's neighborhood, one's family, and one's friends. This is to be distinguished from the *bolshaya Rodina*, the 'big homeland,' which is the state. It is unfortunate that most researchers have studied Russian nationalism from the perspective of the *bolshaya Rodina*, since the virulent Russian nationalism described by many researches (notably John B. Dunlop's 1983 and 1985 works examining National Bolshevism) has not rallied the populace. In Narva, Russian extremists are marginal and are derided by most Russians in positions of power and prestige (notably, the majority of journalists). However, Russians can identify with the importance of the *malaya Rodina*, and this situates the idea of identity in the cultural realm as opposed to the political.

In summary, this thesis explores how landscapes are created and how they give meaning to individuals. I will argue that Russian ideas of the Russian people presuppose the existence of a collective 'soul' that animates both nations and individuals. The nation-state is not necessarily the only—or even the primary—referent of belonging; in the case of the Russians of Narva, individuals consider their city as their homeland. The majority of Russians from Narva believe in the existence of a Russian Soul; they also value their culture, their literature, and their language, but they do not necessarily want Narva to be incorporated into the Russian federation. They are comfortable living on the border and continually negotiating that border. What they want is to become citizens of Estonia, while retaining their language, culture, and Russian soul. This thesis, then, proposes a new way of reflecting upon nationalism and the Russians of Narva.

Chapter One

From Crusade to Independence: A History of Estonia and Baltic Nationhood

It is impossible to escape history in Narva. The fortresses are a reminder that Narva has a past. Living under the shadow of the fortresses, the residents of Narva must interpret their personal histories in the larger historical narrative. In the chapters that follow, Russian narratives of nationality and the ways the past is *curated* will be examined in detail. This chapter seeks to provide a cursory review of the history of Estonia in order to situate the events analyzed in successive chapters. It rests upon exhaustive histories that have been written in the past decade, most notably Toivo Raun's *Estonia and the Estonians* (1991). I will use the Estonian past to evaluate theories of nation and nationalism, paying particular attention to the growth of literacy in Estonia under the influence of Protestantism. This historical record allows for a more nuanced discussion of the theory of nationalism and provides a useful point of departure for the metaphor that will be proposed: nations are not imagined or invented, but *curated*. By reviewing the history of Estonia, it is also possible to better understand how Russians and Estonians understand the recent past; the Russians see themselves as liberators, while the Estonians see the Russians as colonizers. The more distant past is used by Russians to justify their national soul and character, which are used in their day-to-day agency and their contacts with the larger Estonian community. Finally, by examining the past, it is possible to seek guidance for the future. The Republic of Estonia in the 1920s and 1930s developed very liberal models of national accommodation that gave ethnic minorities a great deal of cultural autonomy. This past could serve as a useful model not only for Estonia, but for global questions of nation and nationhood. The goal of this chapter is to understand the present dynamic in Estonia not only as part of a larger historical context, but in the larger global community as well.

The Ancestral Estonians

At the beginning of the first millennium, the ancestral Estonians were established in their Baltic homelands. Not yet divided into nations, the Estonians formed part of a much larger belt of Finno-Ugric[9] speakers that spread from the shores of the Baltic to the Ural Mountains and beyond. During the first millennium, the Estonian language took shape, diverging from the related languages of the Livonians and the Votes—the closest linguistic relatives to the Estonians. As populations shifted in the first millennium, one group of Finno-Ugric speakers left its Eastern homelands to travel west. The ancestral

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[9] The Finno-Ugrians linguistic sub-group includes a number of languages that are characterized by agglutination. The Ugric branch of this language family includes the Hungarian language and the Ob-Ugric subgroup: Mansi and Khanty languages of Siberia. The Finnic subgroup includes the Perm-Finnic (Udmurt, Komi and Komi-Permyak languages), the Volga-Finnic (Mordvin and Mari languages) and the Balto-Finnic. The Balto-Finnic includes both the Northeastern Balto-Finnic (Eastern Finnish, Ingrian (or Izhorian), Karelian-Olonetsian, Ludic, Vepsian) and the Southwestern Balto-Finnic (Estonian, Livonian, Votic and Western Finnish). The Balto-Finnic languages are related to another subgroup: the Sami (or the Northern Finnic) and all the Finno-Ugric languages are distantly related to the Samoyedic sub-group that would include the languages of the Nenets and other northern Russian indigenous languages. The Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic sub-groups comprise a much larger language family, the Uralic (see Raun 1991: 5).

Hungarians—the Magyars—settled the Danube River basin in the late 9th century. In the same period, Slavs were pushing into Finno-Ugric territories to the Northeast and in some cases overwhelmed and assimilated indigenous populations, leaving only the occasional trace of the previous inhabitants. The name Moscow, in Russian, indicates a Finno-Ugrian origin. Nonetheless, by the year 1200, the ancestral Estonians inhabited the territory of what is now the Republic of Estonia (see Raun 1991: 1-10).

The Estonians spoke a common language that came to be marked by two primary dialects: northern and southern. Estonian society in the year 1200 could be characterized as 'tribal' because individuals with power and prestige dominated political and social life; however, Estonia was not highly stratified, nor did it have a centralized leadership. Estonian society had slaves—as was often the case in Eastern Europe—but the majority of Estonians were free farmers, with kinship being the primary form of political and social organization. As Toivu Raun notes, "There was no concept of a nobility nor of princes or kings in the usual sense of the terms" (1991: 11). Following this loose decentralized pattern, the Estonian countryside was organized into regions, each with its own set of fortifications. Leadership was comprised of a council of elders (high-ranking individuals), and the regions retained their autonomy. This would prove to be a

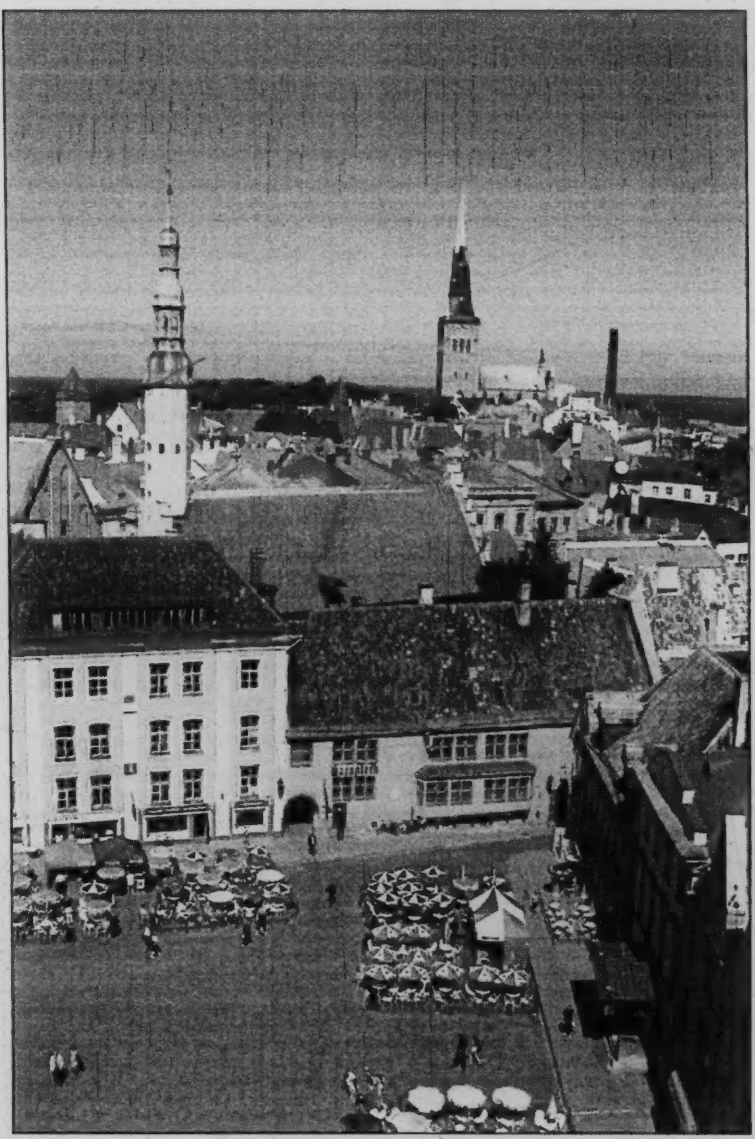

Figure 2: Tallinn (Old City)

weakness in the 13th century; unlike the Lithuanians, who were able to organize themselves politically and conquer vast territories, German crusaders and Danish invaders conquered the Estonians.

In the year 1200, the Estonians remained outside of Christianity; though Christianity was starting to make inroads, Estonian remained faithful to traditional beliefs and religious practices. As is still the case for populations to the north and east, the Estonian world was populated by material and spiritual beings. The animism of the ancestral Estonians was marked by the belief in spirits inhabiting the natural world, and each village had a sacred grove and select stones and trees as sites for sacrifice (likely grain and animals). However, little knowledge of the religion remains; "By the last centuries of the prehistoric period the Estonians had probably created a world of gods and the rudiments of a mythology, but judging by how little survived into historic times, it could not have been highly developed" (Raun 1991: 12). The fact that the Estonians had not fully converted to Christianity would provide the ideological justification for the conquest of these territories. Following European expansion into the Levant in the First Crusade and the creation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1099, crusader fervor was directed northwards towards those lands that had yet to adopt Christianity.

To the South were the Balts (Latvians and Lithuanians), whose Indo-European languages are unrelated to the Finno-Ugric languages to the North. In the year 1200, there would have been greater ethnic diversity: the Baltic languages included the Yotvingian language (Jatvians or Jatvingians); the

Curonians (Cours or Kurs); the Semigallians (Zemgallians); and the Selonians (Selians). Most of these populations were assimilated, mainly into the Latvian community[10], but some into the Lithuanian one. The Baltic language group also included the Prussian language; the territory of the Baltic Prussians was conquered by the Teutonic Knights and devastated and depopulated by warfare, and the Balts were subsumed by a German population that moved into the territory. By the 17th century, the remaining Baltic Prussians were assimilated.

Coupled with the expansion of Germans to the east, Slavs continued to push north and east. The movement of Slavs was facilitated by a global warming period that allowed the spread of agriculture northwards. In the first decades of the second millennium, the Eastern Slavs reached the shores of Lake Peipsi ("Chudskoe"[11] in Russian). Unlike the Estonians, the Slavs had adopted Christianity, first in the south. Then in 988 the Prince of Kiev converted to Christianity, however they adopted Christianity from the Byzantine Empire (the Eastern Roman Empire) centered in Constantinople.[12] The Eastern Slavs were largely Orthodox Christian as opposed to the Catholicism (and later Protestantism) of the Western Slavic lands. Not only did the Eastern Slavs adopt Christianity, they also developed a centralized state, Kievan Rus', with its own ruling dynasty (the Rurikids). However, by the year 1200, Kievan Rus' had broken into a number of feuding principalities. Vladimir (who reigned from 980 to 1015) decreed that the major cities would be distributed among his sons following his death, and the brothers were to succeed each other moving up the rank of cities towards Kiev; eventually, the senior nephews would inherit principalities in turn. Vladimir's succession principle was followed for close to a century, but the successions were accompanied by continual warfare as princes tried to seize their positions by force. Also, all inhabitants of towns had the right to attend town assembly meetings, the *veche*, and thus participate in the governing of a regional district. The *veche* had its say when it came to the acceptance of a new prince, and often rejected a prince designated to rule it. It would often seek to curtail the rights of princes through the use of treaties in order to avoid the devastation of warfare over contested patrimonies. Over time, the princes tended to settle in regions rather than move from one city to the next in succession (see Pares 1953: 44-45). In 1097, the princes met and decided to divide their lands into patrimonial estates; only the title of grand prince was to be based on the pattern established by Vladimir. Though there were attempts to unify the lands of Rus', the tendency was for increased territorial fragmentation and the emergence of local lineages ruling regional principalities. These principalities were unable to resist Mongol invasions in the 13th century, however. In 1240, a Mongol army moved through the principalities of Rus', besieged Kiev, and proceeded to destroy much of the city and kill most of its population. The city of Kiev and surrounding territories came under the dominion of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 14th century, and the remaining principalities of Kievan Rus' were subjugated to the Mongol invaders. This political fragmentation accelerated the linguistic and cultural division of the Eastern Slavs into a number of national populations, with the Ukrainians and Belarusns to the west and the Russians to the east (Pares 1953).

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[10] The Latvians assimilated not only related Indo-European populations; they equally integrated other language families such as the Livonian, a Finno-Ugric language, of whom less than one hundred speakers remain.

[11] Chudskoe is an adjective with the root being "Chud", a term used in the oldest Russian texts to refer to a tribute paying population to the North.

[12] Kievan Rus' was founded on trade: its extensive water routes allowed for goods and people to travel from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea and to the Byzantium Empire. As the northern Baltic Region was still largely pagan, Greek missionaries from the Byzantine Empire were actively proselytizing in the Eastern Slav lands.

The Coming of the Crusaders

In the 13th century, German Crusaders conquered much of the Baltic Region, imposing Christianity and a feudal order onto the Estonian and Latvian lands. The eastern coast of the Baltic Sea, whose population practiced a cult of the ancestors and animism, was one of the last remaining non-Christian regions of Europe. As noted, the religion was as decentralized as the Estonian political structure; there were no full-time priests and no written tradition (Taagepera 1993: 14). This is in stark contrast with the emerging structures of Christian Europe. In the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem, a new form of religious organization was developed: a religious military order of knighthood. In 1119 or 1120, a small group of French knights vowed to devote themselves to protecting pilgrims and holy places in the kingdom of Jerusalem. Out of this small group of knights emerged the Templars, a military organization composed of knights,

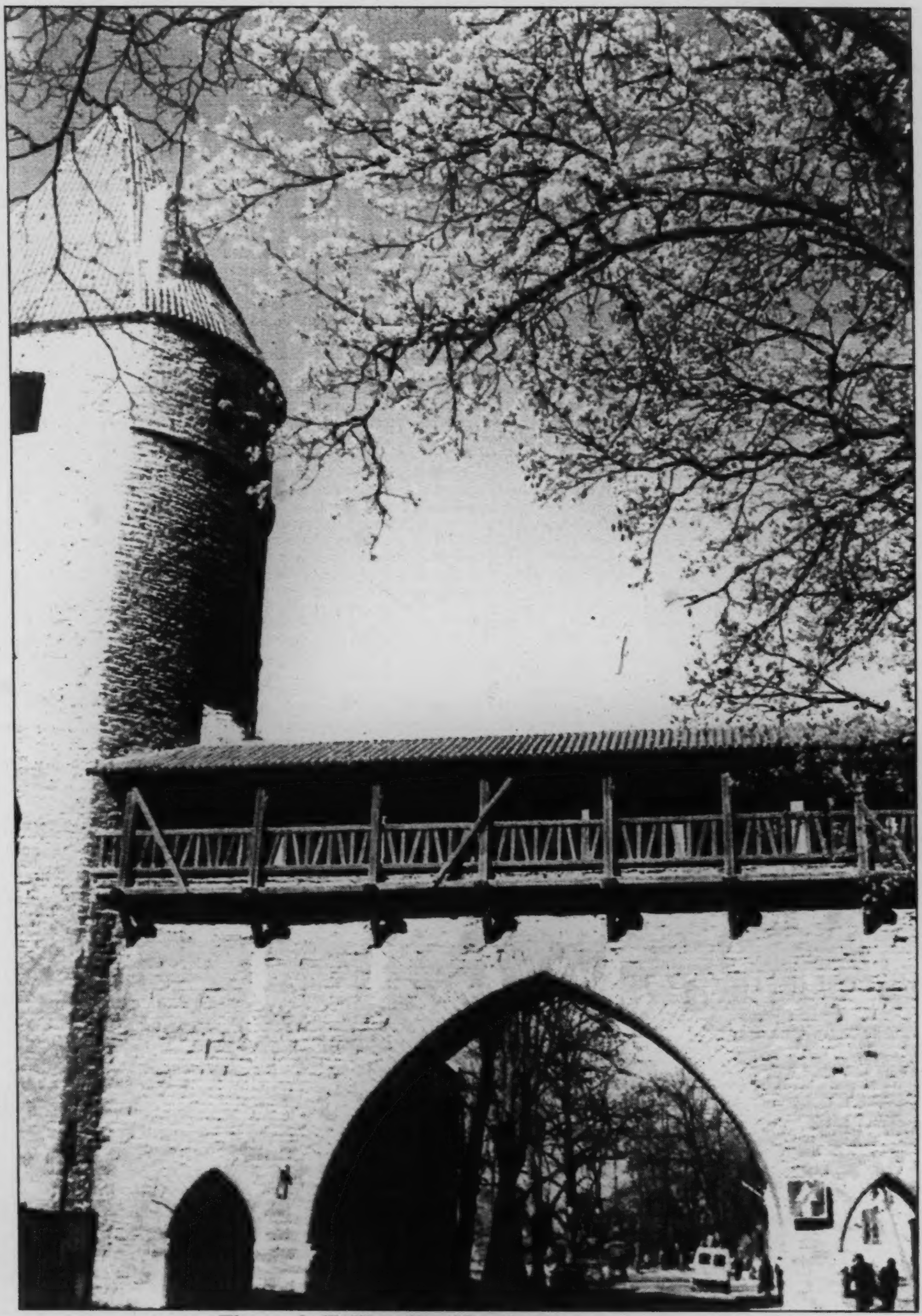

Figure 3: Tallinn Fortifications

white cloaks marked by a red cross. They were a highly centralized and disciplined organization headed by a grand master, and organized with local branches ruled by a commander who owed obedience to the grand master. Templars took vows of poverty and chastity, even though they were knights and not specifically a religious order. The early success of the Templars was followed by the organization of similar orders of knights in Europe, notably the Teutonic Knights and the Order of the Sword who conquered Baltic lands for Christianity (see Robinson 1991).

In 1202, the Order of the Knights of Christ— the 'Sword Brethren'—was founded under the leadership of Bishop Albert von Buxhoevden (Albert I, Bishop of Livonia). It was comprised mainly of Germans, with its headquarters in Riga. Confirmed by Pope Innocent III in 1204, the Sword Brethren was established as a permanent military body in Livonia[13] to protect the church's conquests and to forcibly convert the native populations to Christianity. From 1208 to 1227, the Estonians and other peoples of the Baltic resisted the invasion of the German Sword Brethren, the Danes, and the Swedes. However, by 1227, the Sword Brethren controlled what is now Latvia and Southern Estonia, Danes controlled Northern Estonia (including Tallinn—*Taan linn*, the 'Danish Fortress'; the Danes also had built a fortress in Narva; see Raun 1991: 15-18).

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[13] Historical Livonia comprised roughly the present territories of Estonia and Latvia.

Though the Sword Brethren conquered Livonia, they were unable to maintain their rule over the region and were incorporated into the Teutonic Knights, a powerful military organization organized only a few years prior to the Sword Brethren (also known as the Livonian Knights). The Teutonic Knights and their descendants, the Baltic German Nobility, would rule the region for close to seven centuries. The Teutonic Knights were, like the Templars and the Sword Brethren, a militarized monastic order. In 1205, they were granted the right to wear a white cloak with black cross. The Teutonic Knights received extensive land grants in the Kingdom of Jerusalem, Germany and elsewhere. While the Sword Brethren were conquering and converting the peoples of the Eastern Baltic, the Teutonic Knights were conquering the Prussian Balts. After suffering defeat at the hands of the Lithuanians and the Semgalians, the Order of the Sword of the Brethren became a branch of the Teutonic Knights. Likewise, after an uprising in the lands of Northern Estonia that was quelled by the Teutonic Knights, the King of Denmark sold Danish interests in the region to the Teutonic Knights. The German Knights (and attendant German nobility, clergy, and merchants) became the dominant social classes in the region. Though Livonia was a part of the Holy Roman Empire, in practice it was largely autonomous. (Christiansen 1997)

Alexander Nevsky

The military ambitions of the Teutonic Knights were checked on the ice of Lake Peipsi. Having successfully campaigned against the remaining pagan people of Europe, the Catholic Church turned to the Orthodox East. In 1236, the Pope incited the Swedish monarch to launch a crusade against the Orthodox Rus'. Jarl Birger marched against Alexander, Prince of Novgorod, and was routed on the Neva[14] River, losing several ships in the process. At the time Rus' was being devastated by invading Mongol forces, German Teutonic Knights besieged the nearby city of Pskov and started building a fort to block trade routes to Novgorod. Alexander led a counterattack, taking the German fort, freeing Pskov, and defeating the Teutonic Knights on the frozen Lake Peipsi in April 1242. Three years later, he defeated Lithuanian forces; a few years after that, the Mongols appointed Alexander as Grand Prince of Rus'. Realizing that he could not resist the Mongol forces, Alexander submitted to them and agreed to pay tribute to the Khans. Alexander Nevsky's youngest son, Daniel, established the dynasty that ruled in Moscow and the empire that would expand out of Moscow until the end of the 16th century (Pares 1953: 57-59 and 78). Ivan the Terrible,[15] a descendant of Alexander Nevsky, attacked Livonia in 1558 with a force of 40,000 soldiers; these Russian forces crushed the Teutonic Knights in 1560. Ivan the Terrible's invasion of Livonia failed due to the intervention of outside Danish, Swedish, and Polish military forces. The Teutonic Knights had been in decline for too long to

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[14] Hence the appellation Alexander Nevsky: an adjective commemorating his victory over Swedish forces on the Neva river. The Neva River flows through the city of Saint Petersburg in Russia founded centuries later by Peter the Great.

[15] To be accurate, the correct translation should be "Ivan the Dread."

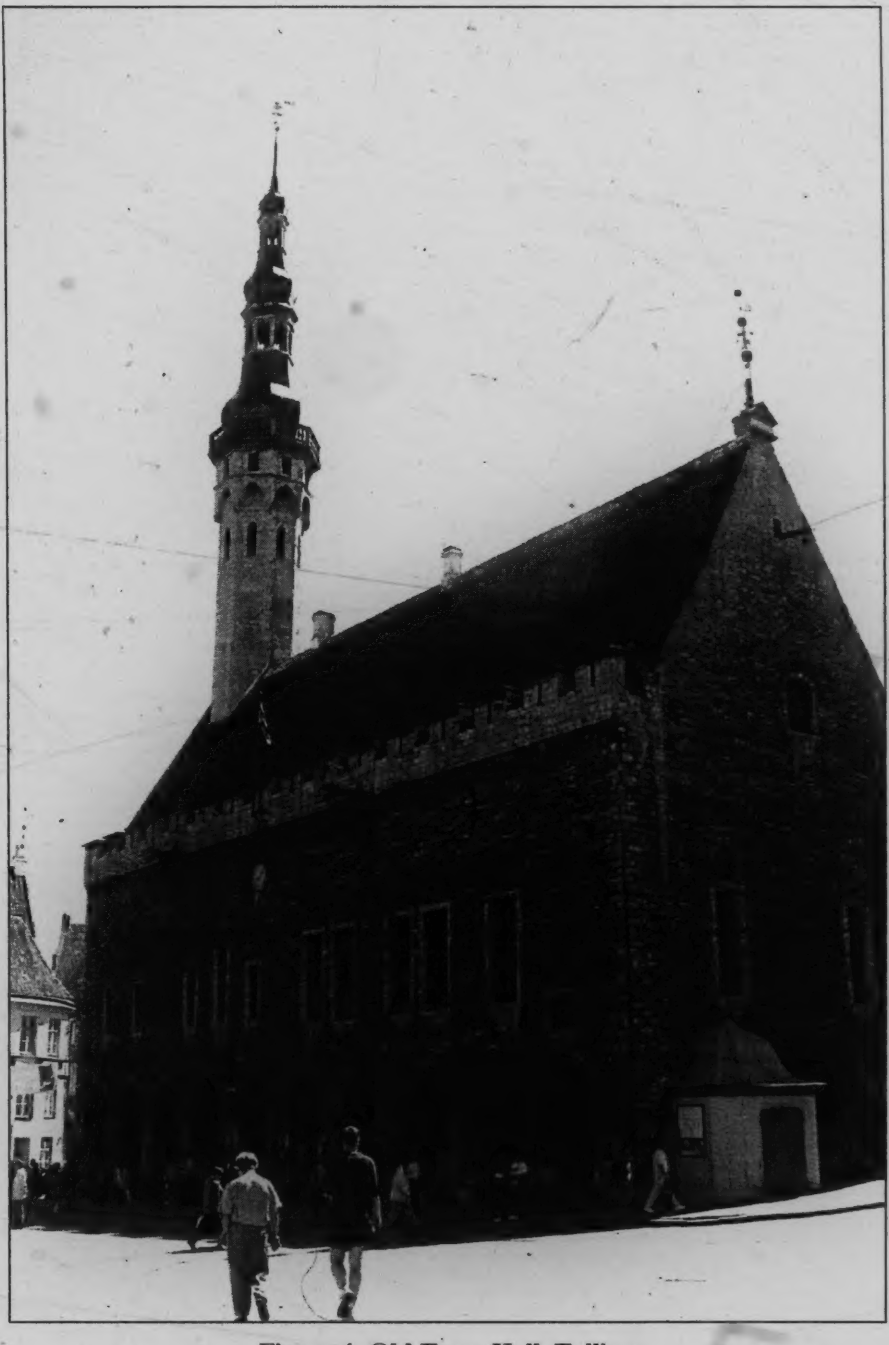

Figure 4: Old Town Hall, Tallinn

successfully resist a large invasion,[16] and the region (including what is now Estonia) would fall under the rule of a succession of foreign powers (Sweden, Poland, and the Russian Empire). (Christiansen 1997)

In spite of the decline of the Teutonic Knights as a military presence in Livonia, the German nobility and upper classes consolidated their power and status in the region, having eliminated the Bishops of the Catholic Church and the Teutonic Knights. The German nobility consolidated its hold on the region and would enjoy unparalleled hegemony in the region for several more centuries: "If there was any victor in the Livonian Wars, it was the Baltic German nobility. The field was cleared of two major rivals (the bishops and the Teutonic Knights), and a third threat, the cities, suffered relatively more than the nobility itself" (Raun 1991: 28). The Swedish rulers needed to ensure the loyalty of the German nobility to help counter the threat the Russians posed and to ensure the production of Baltic grain. Though the Swedes had a tradition of free peasantry, the German nobility in the Baltic organized the Estonian countryside along the German pattern of feudal society. Cities emerged, populated mainly by Germans, but the countryside was inhabited by the conquered peoples, simply referred to as

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[16] In the 15th century, Poland defeated the Teutonic Knights and the Polish crown acquired possession of Teutonic territories to the west of the lower Vistula River. A wedge of Polish territory was thus established between German-speaking East Prussia and Germany, territory that had been previously contiguous. With the coming of the Protestant Reformation and the spread of Lutheranism, the Teutonic Knights would be dissolved in East Prussia: the last Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, Albert of Hohenzollern in Prussia converted to Lutheranism in 1525 and, under the advice of Luther, secularized the political order, making East Prussia a duchy and the former Grand Master became the first Duke.

Undeutsche (non-Germans), "a term applied to all subjected people, from the Slavic Sorbs to the Latvians and Estonians" (Taagepera 1993: 23). However, the Deutsche in the conquered Baltic territories of Livland, Estland, and Courland[17]—referred to collectively as Livonia—were but a small minority, representing less than five per cent of the population. The rulers and also the merchants were German; the German Baltic merchants had joined the Hanseatic League. The peasants were enserfed, and by 1495, serfs could be sold without an accompanying land sale (Taagepera 1993: 19). In Estonia and Latvia, language marked social status. Unlike Prussia, German settlers had no overland route to the conquered territories (Lithuania blocked access by land). As a number of authors have recognized, including Franz Boas (1986[1928]) cited in chapter one, it was the presence of large numbers of German peasants that succeeded in assimilating the Slavic[18] peasantry in what is now East Germany as well as the indigenous Baltic Prussian peasantry farther to the north and east. The German peasantry could not easily be relocated to Livonia, thus sheltering the local languages and ensuring that the peasantry would not be assimilated to the language and culture of the ruling nobility. The divide between noble/merchant/cleric and serf was thus not only social, but also linguistic. The Germans never assimilated, and the serfs were never encouraged to learn German. As Taagepera states, "To the Livonian nobles, a German-speaking peasant had come unthinkable, and few were the intermediary jobs for which a limited knowledge of German would have been of use. There was no incentive for peasants to master German. Conditions were different in the cities, but these were few, and the rigid structure of guilds reduced opportunities" (1993: 21).

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[17] Estonia was created by joining Estland and the northern Livland where ethnic Estonians predominated. See map "Decline of German Power in the Baltic Region" for the contours of these historic regions.

[18] At the end of the first millennium, Slavs (the Wends) inhabited the territory between the Oder and Elbe Rivers. In the first half of the 12th century, Germans led a crusade against the Wends, the warfare led to depopulation, and German settlers followed the crusaders colonizing the territory and assimilating the surviving Wends. The Sorbs, a small Slavic population located in Lusitania, is what remains of much larger Slavic population in territories now considered German.

Though the spread of Christianity had been the ideological impetus for the conquest of Livonia, the Catholic Church paid little attention to the education of the *Undeutsche*. The region had been converted to Christianity at a time when the use of vernaculars was being eroded within the Catholic Church. Charlemagne had encouraged the use of the 'rustic languages' (i.e. vernaculars) by the Church, and the Council of Tours in 813 had obliged that sermons be given in the vernacular; however, the Catholic Church began to restrict the use of the vernacular, choosing to spread the faith using the sword as opposed to teaching it in the vernacular. The 11th century marked a period of increasing conservatism in the Catholic Church. In 1059, the Church was reformed, and future popes were to be elected by clergy alone. Also, the practice of celibacy was revived. As Alexander Murray notes, this made the clergy "a universal, Latin-speaking group abstracted from ordinary society" (2001: 111). The Catholic Church then promoted the Latin language to the detriment of the written vernaculars it had promoted during the Carolingian Renaissance; "In the first century of the reform, the church pushed hard enough for the universality of its language to kill off budding vernaculars, like Anglo-Saxon" (Murray 2001: 113). In the conquered Baltic territories this meant that a written language was not developed for the conquered until the Protestant Reformation—only a few words, sentences, and names were written in Estonian. The language of the clergy was German and Latin. Consequently, Estonians were effectively barred from the clergy.

The emergence of a written Estonian vernacular can be traced to the Protestant Reformation. With the spread of Protestant thought, along with Martin Luther's insistence that the ministers preach in the language of the congregation, the Bible was translated into Estonian. In certain ways, Luther's insistence on the use of the vernacular was similar to earlier church practices in that it was recognized that true conversion could only be achieved through the use of the vernacular. The clergy now had to know enough Estonian for sermons and hymns. In the 1530s, sermons were conducted in Estonian, and the oldest surviving printed Estonian-language book—a catechism—dates back to 1535. Though it was ordered removed from sale due to alleged errors, this marked an important symbolic turning point, demonstrating that the Estonian language could be equal to the German (see Taagepera 1993: 22). Swedish[19] rule also promoted the printing in the Estonian language.[20]

The spread of Protestantism and the subsequent Catholic Counter-Reformation served to promote literacy and encouraged the use of the vernacular.

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[19] The ideas of Martin Luther had spread to Sweden, which was quickly converted to Lutheranism.
[20] This was not without precedent: a Finnish Bible was first printed in Stockholm and the Finns under Swedish rule were encouraged to read the Bible in their language. The Finns, as noted in the introduction, speak a closely related language to the Estonians.

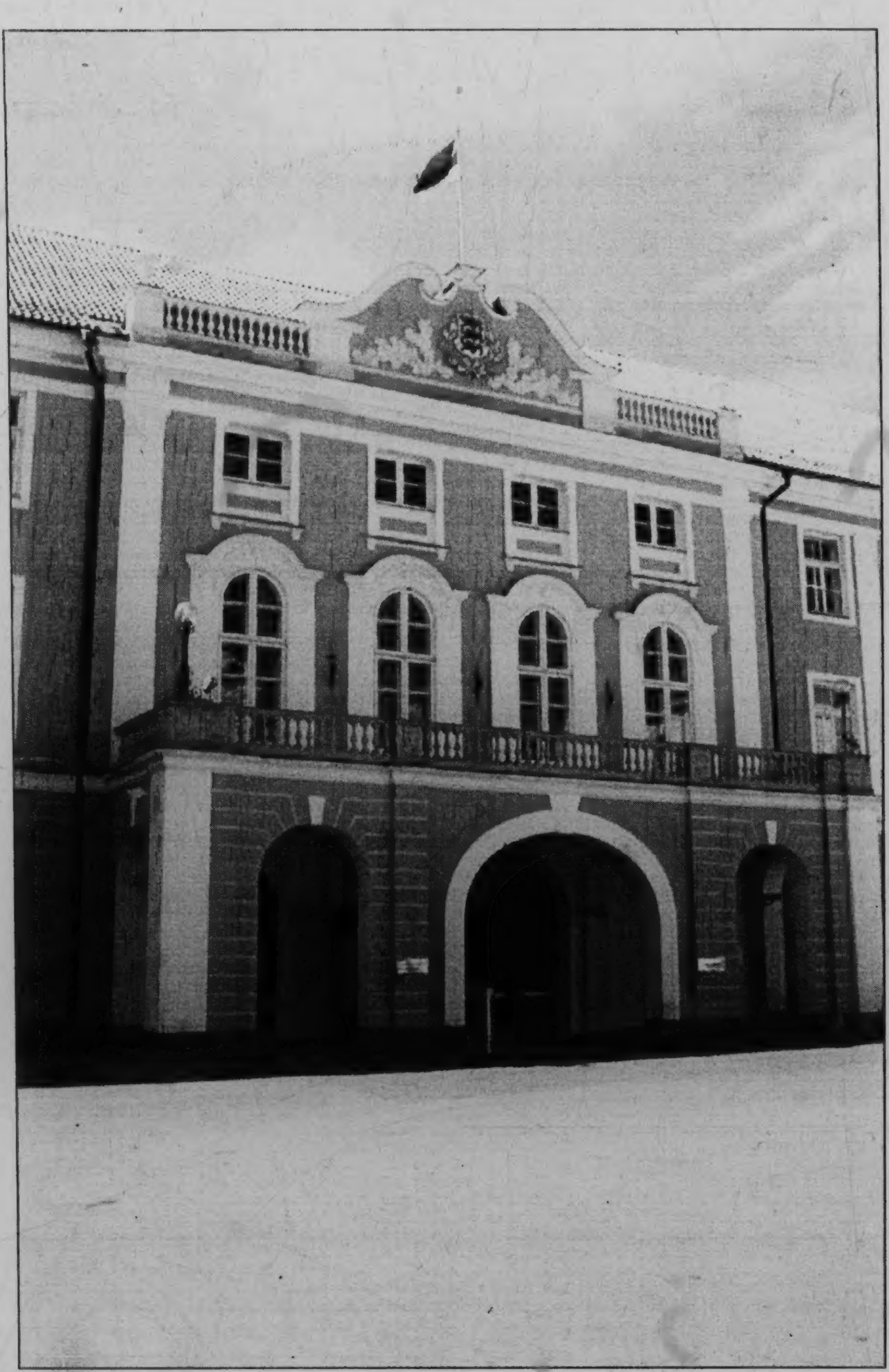

Figure 5: Estonian Parliament (*Riigikogu*)

Both Protestants and Catholics used local vernaculars as a means of reaching the peasantry. Under Swedish rule, book printing was expanded, and the Swedish authorities and Lutheran Church had published forty titles, all religious in nature, by the end of the 17th century. Two literary dialects began to emerge in Estonia: a northern and a southern Estonian dialect. As it had done in Finland, the Swedish Crown opened schools to educate peasant children. In 1632, Swedish authorities founded a university in Tartu, but it was not the first; the city had been the site of a Polish Jesuit college from 1583-1601 (see Taagepera 1993: 25-26). The impact of the Reformation in the Baltics[21] was profound and long lasting. The origins of Finnish, Estonian, and Latvian literacy can be traced back to Martin Luther. Lutheranism promoted the reading of the Bible in the vernacular, and the Catholic Church tried to counter the spread of Luther's ideas by printing its religious texts in the vernacular as well. In Estonia, for example, there is evidence of a Catholic work published in 1517 and a Lutheran text in Estonian printed in 1525. To cite Raun, "It was only with the struggle between Catholic and Protestant forces for the hearts and minds of the Estonian people that an extensive Estonian text came into existence" (1991: 24). This religious motivation promoted widespread literacy prior to widespread universal education. The history of literacy in the region allows for a more subtle reading of the interplay between printing, religion, literacy, and nationhood.

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[21] The Baltics include those territories surrounding the Baltic Sea. These include the modern States of Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia (see the maps "Europe" and "The Baltic States" included in the thesis). With the exception of Catholic Poland and Lithuania, and Orthodox Russia, the remaining regions were Lutheran.

Printing and literacy are central to modernist theorists (notably Anderson 1983, and Gellner 1983). For Benedict Anderson, print-capitalism is of primary importance to the imagining of nations. He argues that "What, in a positive sense, made the new communities imaginable was a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communications (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity" (1991: 42-43). Anderson highlights the importance of the Protestant Reformation, yet states that Protestantism was always on the offensive because it "knew how to make use of the expanding vernacular print-market being created by print-capitalism" (1991: 40) and affirms that the "coalition between Protestantism and print-capitalism exploiting cheap popular editions, quickly created large new reading publics" (1991: 40). Though there was a coalition, Anderson implies that print-capitalism defined the market, as there was too much linguistic diversity to accommodate all of the vernaculars and their dialects. According to Anderson, "Had print-capitalism sought to exploit each potential oral vernacular market, it would have remained a capitalism of petty proportions" (1991: 43). Rather than having a print-language for each 'oral vernacular,' related vernaculars were assembled "within definite limits" into print-languages that were more comprehensive and few in number (Anderson 1991: 43). As Anderson states, "Nothing served to 'assemble' related vernaculars more than capitalism, which, within the limits imposed by grammars and syntaxes, created mechanically reproduced print-languages capable of dissemination through the market" (1991: 44).

Though the Estonian case does buttress the idea of print-capitalism, a closer analysis of the history of literacy counters some of the assumptions behind Anderson's concept of the imagined community. Whereas Anderson posits that print-capitalism is the driving force assembling related vernaculars, in Estonia, it was Protestantism, aided and financed by the Swedish Crown and the Lutheran Church, that created a reading market; the spread of printing was not motivated by capitalism, but by religious ideals. Luther promoted the use of printing and vernaculars in order to effectively teach the masses. Consequently, the size of the 'market' was not central to the work of Lutheran ministers. In Estonia, two printing 'dialects' emerged, corresponding to the two vernacular dialects, and in Latvia there were three[22]. In Estonia, the first printing presses correspond to the two main dialect regions where the variations were not sufficient to make the printed texts unintelligible; one printing shop was established in Tartu—the focal

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[22] In his discussion of "national" languages, Hobsbawm states that written languages are "almost always semi-artificial construct" (1992: 54). He notes that the challenge is to devise a standard idiom based on a multiplicity of spoken idioms. He states that the written idiom is invariably based on one spoken vernacular idiom and invariably other related vernacular idioms are demoted to dialects. He affirms that the "subsequent problems of standardizing and homogenizing national grammar and orthography, and adding new elements to the vocabulary are secondary" (1992: 54). He cites as a case in point literary Latvian that was based on the middle of three variants. This is correct, but what Hobsbawm fails to mention is that the three Latvian "idioms" were already written idioms as Latvia shared the same Lutheran heritage as Estonia and equally had high literacy rates in the vernacular.

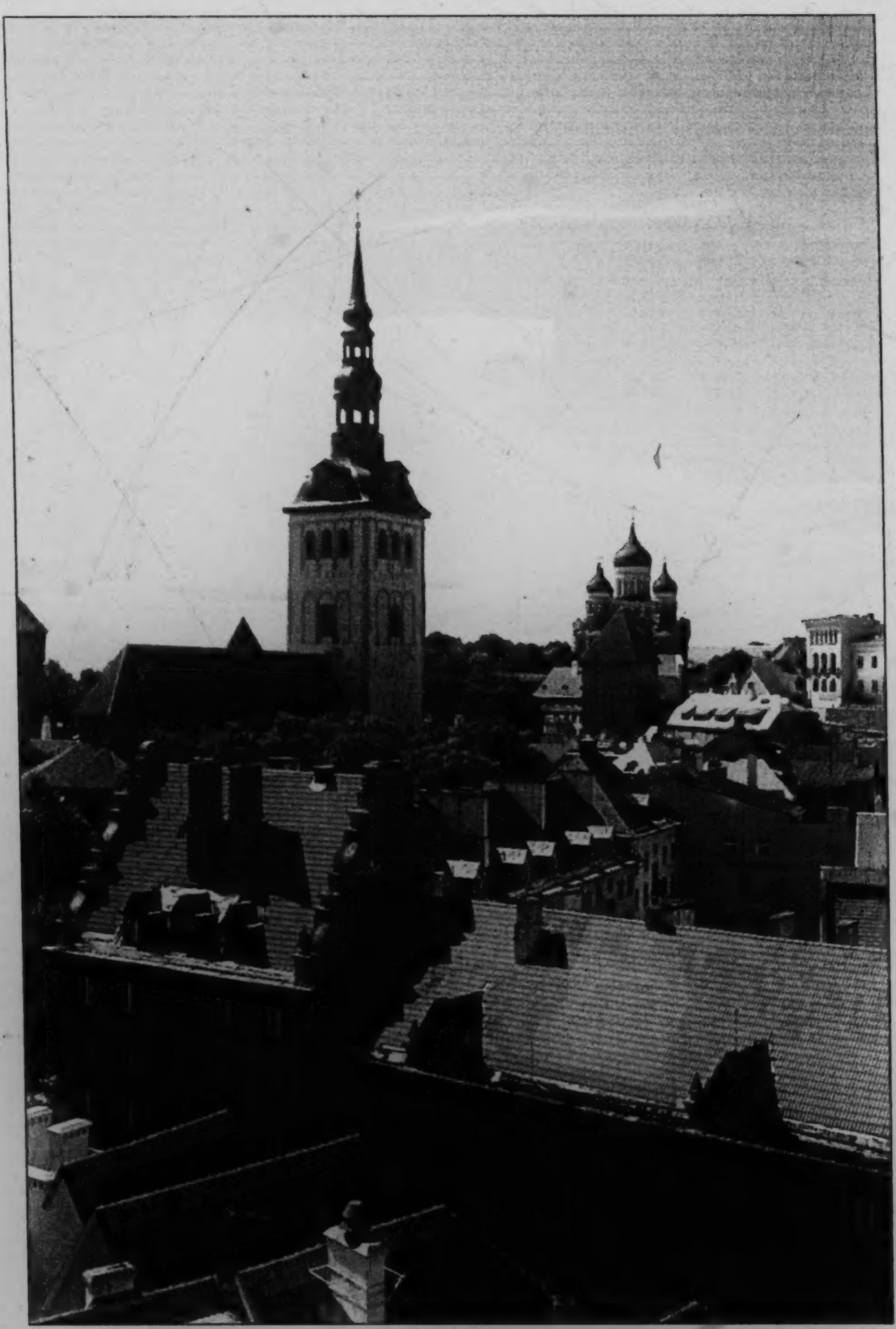

Figure 6: Tallinn Skyline

point of the southern Estonian dialect—in 1631, and another was established four years later in Tallinn—the centre of the northern dialect (see Raun 1991: 32).

Rather than encourage the use of a limited number of printed vernaculars, the spread of Lutheranism in the Baltic region saw the emergence of print-languages that were used for religious literature. The emphasis on literacy in the vernacular as a means to attain religious salvation promoted literacy. This was achieved not in schools, but in the homes of the peasantry as they learned to read and in turn taught their children and others. The Moravian Brethren, for example, focused their energies on teaching the peasantry to read, and even to write; the peasantry then could teach their children (Raun 1991: 54). David Scheffel (1991) provides an interesting account of how this could have been accomplished. In his study of the Russian Old Believers of Alberta, he notes how Church Slavonic was taught to children; "Depending on age and aptitude, each pupil receives a Church Slavonic text, either a primer or a book of prayers, and recites an appointed passage aloud along with the other participants" (Scheffel 1991: 105). Old Believer children were thus taught to read the 'old books' without the benefit of schools or teachers; I would infer that a similar process was used to teach Estonian children to read. In the 17th century, the main market for printed texts was the clergy, who "needed materials with which to preach to their parishioners" (Raun 1991: 32). It was through this gradual process that the peasantry reached high levels of literacy, and—at a much later period—this new market permitted the establishment of Anderson's print-capitalism. In the second half of the 19th century, the printing of newspapers and other profane texts surpassed the sale of religious literature that predominated in the first half of the century. The majority of the titles printed in Estonia from 1800 to 1850 were religious and devotional literature; the number declined to just over a quarter in the years 1850-1900 (Kirby 1995: 147). Also, it was in this later period that one dialect—Northern Estonian—was chosen as the national standard, and much effort was invested in standardizing the grammar and expanding the vocabulary to accommodate the needs of modern communication.

The work and theory of Adrian Hastings suggests that this process of educating the masses would have encouraged the peoples of the Baltics to see themselves as 'nations.' Hastings effectively argues that the Bible serves as a mirror for nationhood, providing a model for what a nation is and should be (see Hastings 1997). He stresses the importance of vernacular Bibles in stating that "The correlation between biblical translation and what one may call a national awakening is remarkably close across most of Europe and, quite often, for other parts of the world as well" (1997: 24). It was not necessary for the written vernacular to eradicate oral dialect, as the continued existence of oral dialects "detracts little from the nation-making function of the written form of the language, especially when used publicly in a regular way as in the services of a state church" (1997: 24-25). Hastings describes this as principally a 'Protestant reality,' and the impact of Protestantism was felt long before mass education.

Nonetheless, in Estonia, the effect of the Protestant reality was felt even if the language of state was not Estonian. Hastings notes that the impact of the vernacular Bible affected Protestant Germans more than German Catholics and "encouraged a far greater commitment to Germanness" (1997: 112). Also, in Luther's Bible, the term 'volk' was central to the German vernacular Bible, just as the term 'nation' was to the King James English vernacular Bible. This would have encouraged Germans in the Baltics to see their world in national terms and, more importantly, to move the concept of the 'volk' into other vernaculars (if the term did not exist a priori).

A case study of Estonian Protestantism helps to clarify some of the questions raised by Ernest Gellner (1983). Citing Weber, Gellner highlights the importance of Protestantism in helping to bring about the development of the industrial world. He also hints at a link between nationhood and the Reformation; he writes, "The stress of the Reformation on literacy and scripturalism, its onslaught on a monopolistic priesthood (or, as Weber clearly saw, its universalization rather than abolition of priesthood), its individualism and links with mobile urban populations, all make for a kind of harbinger of social features and attitudes which, according to our model, produce the nationalist age" (1983: 41). However, Gellner credits the modern industrial education system with the advent of widespread literacy and universal 'high' cultures. He argues that, "For a given society, it must be one in which they all breathe and survive and produce. For a given society, it must be one in which they can *all* breathe and speak and produce; so it must be the *same* culture. Moreover, it must now be a great or high (literate, training-sustained) culture, and it can no longer be a diversified, locality-tied illiterate little culture or tradition" (1983: 38). For Gellner, only a state is capable of providing the necessary educational infrastructure to ensure the shared universal high culture, and it is this process of modernization, industrialization, and the exo-socialization of individuals in a 'national' high culture that leads to nations and nationalism. Gellner's ideas were adopted by Hobsbawm, who affirms that "Most students today will agree that standard national languages, spoken or written, cannot emerge as such before printing, mass literacy and hence, mass schooling" (1992: 10). However, the Estonian case demonstrates that Protestant agrarian societies are quite capable of teaching people to read within the home. According to Taagepera, "industry was minimal. Tartu University remained closed, but progress in peasant education resumed. Teaching children to read at home became a tradition, and by 1800, about two-thirds of the adult peasants in southern Estonia could read—a vastly larger share than in Orthodox Russia or Catholic Lithuania" (1993: 27).

Even with the spread of primary schooling in Estonia in the second half of the 19th century, the tradition of home schooling undermined the efforts of the Russian Empire to 'Russify' the Estonian population in the 1880s and 1890s. As Raun explains, "The tradition of instruction at home in Estonian remained strong, and most teachers appear to have continued to use some Estonian in the classrooms since the Tsarist authorities simply lacked the means to enforce

Russification" (Raun 1991: 79). Rather than being Russified, the Estonian literacy rate increased slightly during this period of Russification. By 1897, 95 % of the Estonian population was literate,[23] as opposed to 30 % of the population outside of the Baltic region (see Raun 1991: 79).

The Great Northern War (1700-1721)

Starting with the failed conquest of Narva in 1700 and subsequent Russian conquest of the city in 1704, the Russians Imperial Army marched across all of Estonia by 1710, controlling the entire region. The conquest by Russia came at great cost to the Estonians; the war decimated the population, dropping it from an estimated 350,000 people to less than 150,000. Though Livonia passed from Swedish to Russian dominion, the German Baltic nobility maintained its status in the newly conquered region. Toivu Raun calls the first century and a half of Tsarist rule in Estland and Livland a 'golden age' for the Baltic nobility, as the Tsars and Tsarinas saw the Germans as the major social foundation of their rule. Throughout the 18th century, the Russian Empire was rule by Tsars and Tsarinas who were either Germanophiles or, in the case of Catherine the Great, a German Princess who deposed her husband and ruled for over three decades. The Baltic Germans' nationality was not a liability in this period. As Raun states, "Russian nationalism remained either nascent or muffled in this period, and the central government did not regard the ethnically German character of the Baltic nobility

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[23] As noted earlier, literacy signifying the ability to read, though not necessarily the capacity to write.

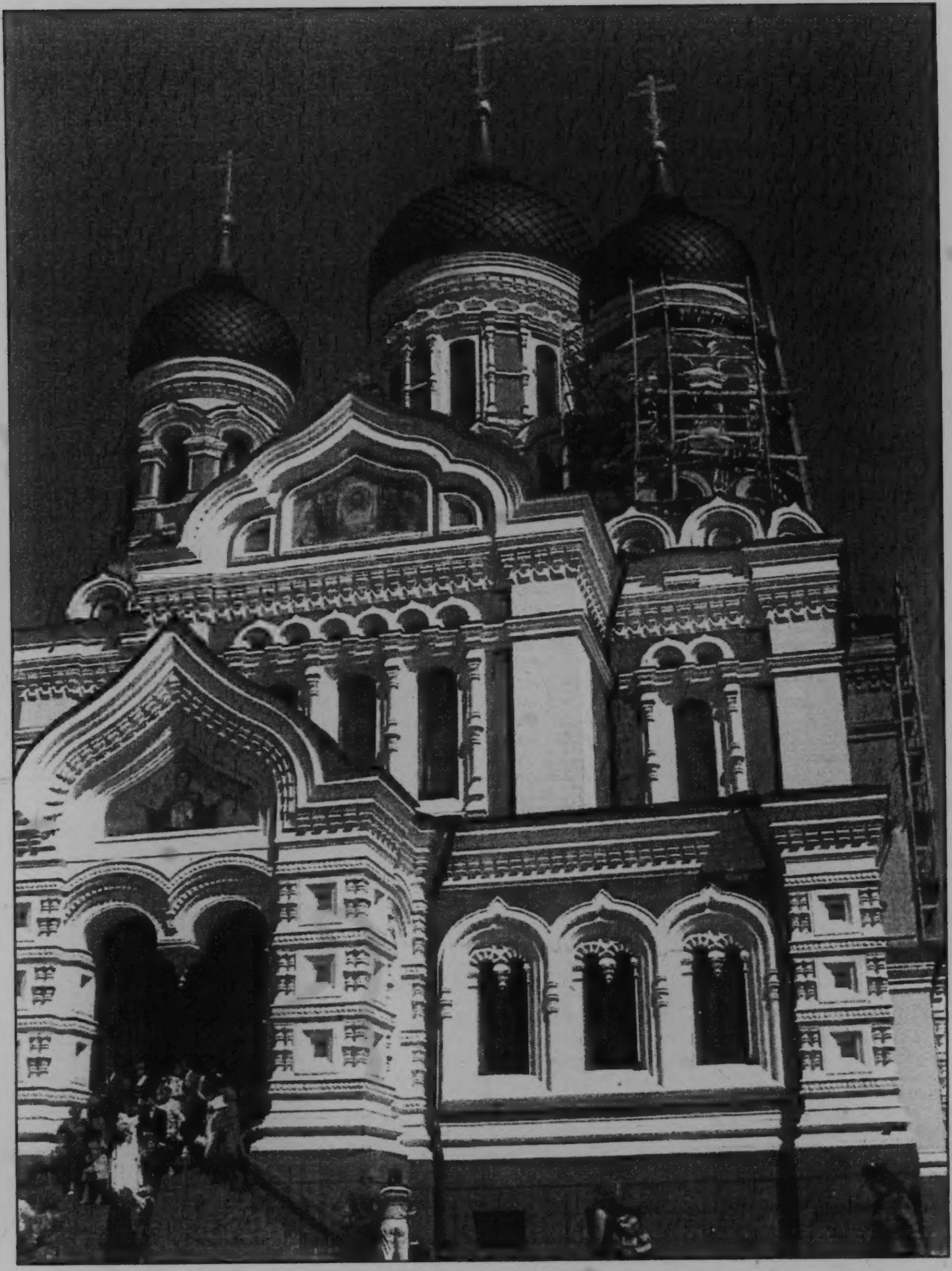

Figure 7: Tallinn Orthodox Church

as a shortcoming" (1991: 51). Certain German nobles defected[24] to the Russian side in the Great Northern War, and they received large estates and great autonomy in administering their lands within the Russian Empire. Many Baltic Germans rose to prominence in the Russian Empire becoming generals, ministers, and other high-ranking officials. Peter the Great, who sought to modernize Russia, had been the first Tsar to travel to Western Europe; he greatly valued the expertise of the Baltic Germans. The Baltic Germans were not assimilated; the nobility maintained ties with Germany, which provided clergy and tutors for the Baltic German nobility. While the status of the German nobility was consolidated, the gains made by the peasantry were reversed, and serfdom was entrenched in the first decades of Russian rule.

The National Awakening and Russification

In the 19th century, the modern Estonian nation emerged with an intense period of 'national awakening' beginning in the 1860s and lasting until the 1880s. According to Raun, this "was a period of conscious agitation by a growing number of activists who sought to convince others of the merits of a modern Estonian nation and culture" (1991: 57). This period was marked by the establishment of a number of national institutions, such as the first secondary school to use Estonian as the language of instruction; the Estonian Alexander School, named in honour of Tsar Alexander I, had the primary task of training teachers for the growing number of primary schools. A Society for Estonian Literati was also founded, and the first all-Estonian song festivals were held, drawing large crowds of spectators. The movement was in large part cultural and featured such achievements as the compilation and publication of the national epic *Kalevipoeg,* an important milestone, as it "was symbolic, affirming the historical existence of the Estonian nation" (Raun 1991: 77). There was also a political and territorial component to the awakening; one of the major political documents was a memorandum presented to the Tsar in 1881 by delegates of seventeen Estonian societies with a membership of 3,000. The memorandum was concerned with raising the status of the Estonians and Estonian culture vis-à-vis the Baltic German nobility, but it also called for the reorganization of the Baltic territories into two administrative units that would correspond to the areas populated by Estonians and Latvians (see Raun 1991: 66). This period is marked not by a drive to create an independent state, but rather to liberate Estonian society and culture from Baltic German hegemony and to increase the national consciousness of the masses. Nonetheless, these activities would eventually facilitate the emergence of an independent Estonian state.

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[24] For the Livonian Baltic German nobility, the Swedish crown was a threat to their privileges and status: the Swedish king Charles XI sought to curb the power of the nobility and in 1672 forced the nobility in Livonia to show their title deeds and pursued the "repossession" of lands from the nobility in a bid to finance the Crown and state apparatus. These measures also served to improve the status of the peasantry in Livonia as the peasantry in the Swedish Kingdom had greater rights and freedoms than the peasantry in Livonia.

The 'national awakening' is inextricably tied to the history of the Estonian peasantry. Prior to the 18th century, the elite—both clerical and secular—were

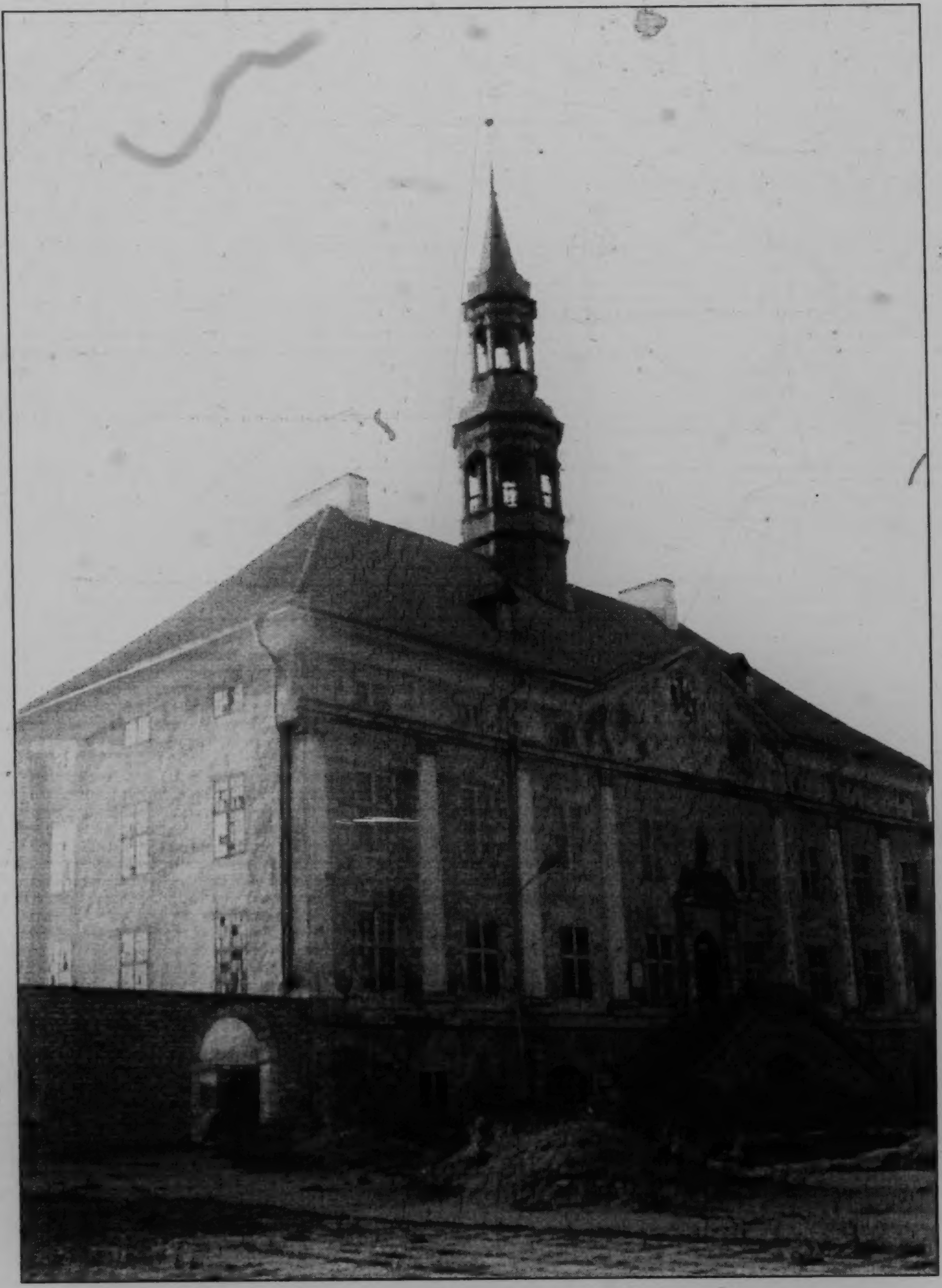

Figure 8: Narva Pre-World War II Building

Deutsche. With Livonia's integration into the Russian Empire, the German nobility had consolidated its hegemony by tying the *Undeutsche* peasantry to the land. This both limited the movement of the peasantry and stifled social and economic mobility. The emancipation of the serfs changed this; from 1816 to 1819, serfdom was abolished in the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire. The serfs did not receive any land, but were free to leave their farms to seek work in the cities. This movement led to the Germans gradually becoming a minority in cities such as Tallinn (German Reval), Narva, and Tartu (German Dorpat), having to compete with upwardly mobile Estonian urban classes. In the mid-19th century, the peasantry was granted the right to lease or buy land. Though the German nobility retained large estates, the liberalization of land ownership allowed the peasantry to prosper, enabling them to challende the German nobility's continued control over coveted agricultural lands. The national awakening, then, was not solely cultural or political, but also had important economic overtones as rising classes of freed Estonian peasants were in economic competition with a small but dominant German minority that still had privileged access to the land and economic capital. Both sides had to compete for status and prestige within the larger political arena of the Russian Empire. In the 18th century, the German nobility in the Baltics had used the Empire to consolidate its power over the peasantry. In the second half of the 19th century, the Russian Empire came to see the German nobility as a greater potential threat to the Empire than the peasantry, thus leading to changing ethnic fortunes in the Baltics.

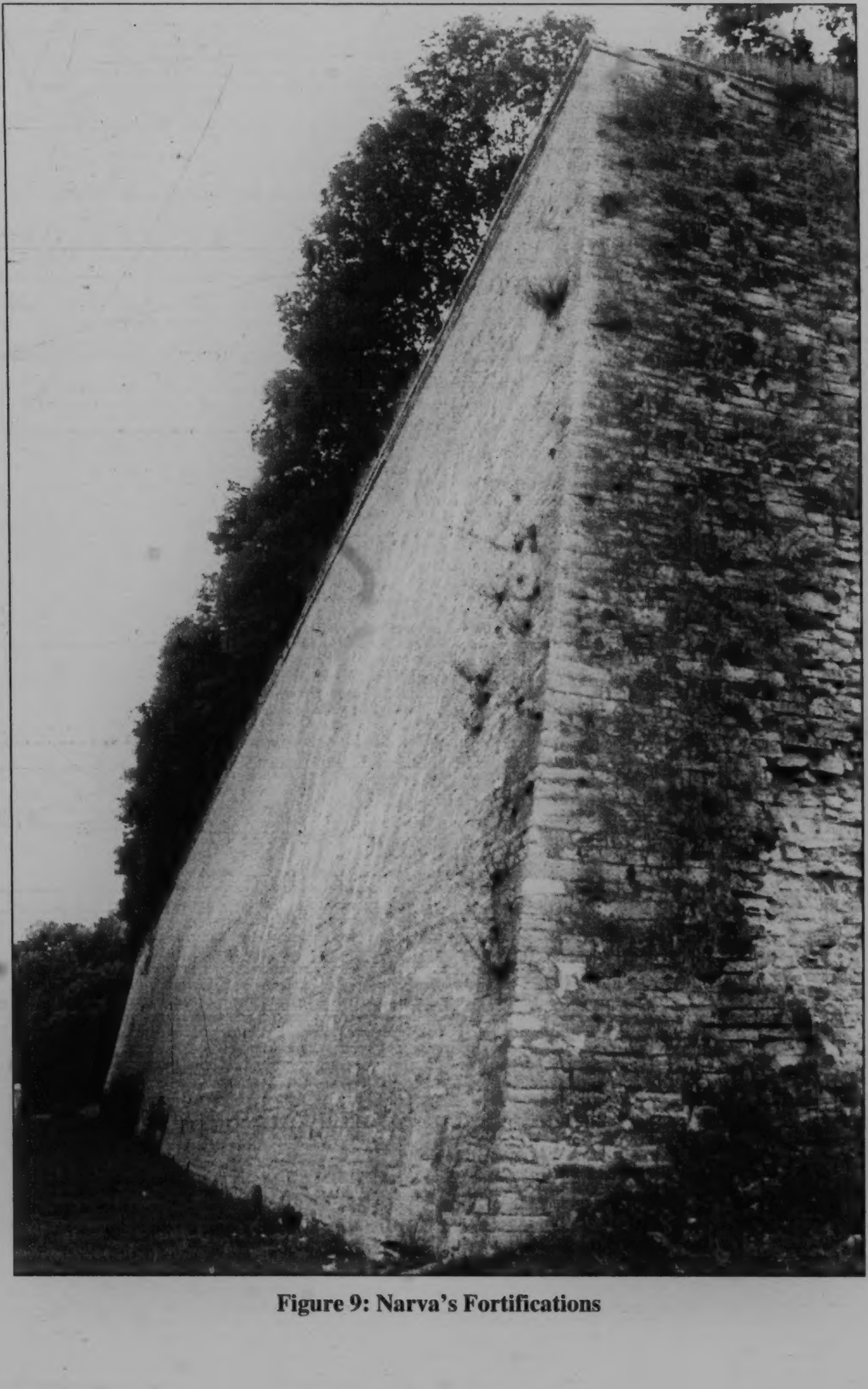

Figure 9: Narva's Fortifications

Out of the growing insecurity of the Russian Empire vis-à-vis its western holdings—the Baltics, Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus—the Russian Empire adopted a new policy of Russification in an attempt to solidify its hold on these territories. Whereas the nationality of the German nobility was not problematic in the 18th century, in the second half of the 19th century, the Imperial government came to see the Germans as a potential threat due to the changing political landscape. A number of events would lead to an attempt to Russify the borderlands, the first being the Polish rebellion of 1863, which forced the Russian Imperial government to reassess its policies. Likewise, the Prussian-led unification of Germany in 1871 threatened Russian control over the Baltics. Russian authorities feared that the Baltic provinces could be annexed by the expansionist new German Empire. As Raun recognizes, "from the Tsarist standpoint, the Baltic provinces were an exposed flank that constituted a security problem because of their non-Russian character. Russification, both administrative and cultural, was intended to block any potential separatism or foreign intervention by integrating the area more closely with the Russian core of the empire" (1991: 63).

In Estonia, the German language had maintained its hegemony in the 19th century; it was the language of administration, justice, and education. However, the Baltic Germans had never sought to assimilate the Baltic people. During the High Middle Ages, this was due primarily to indifference, as neither the nobility nor the clergy sought to educate the peasantry. Prior to the modern period, assimilation occurred only when large numbers of peasants (or decommissioned soldiers settling around outposts and marrying into local communities) moved into a new area and, over time, assimilated fellow peasants. Invaders who only occupied the upper classes were more likely to be assimilated than they were to assimilate the conquered. The Estonians were not assimilated in large part because German peasants did not colonize the region, as was the case in Eastern Germany and Prussia. However, unlike other conquering elites such as the Franks in what is now France, the Norsemen in Normandy, and the Normans in England, the Germans in the Baltics did not assimilate and adopt the language of the peasantry.

With the Reformation, Luther's insistence on using the vernacular to preach to the masses meant that the Lutheran Church in Estonia did not act as a force for assimilation, even though the ministers were predominantly German. Instead, as reviewed earlier in the chapter, Lutheranism promoted the development of an Estonian literary tradition through the translation of the Bible and other literary texts. This vernacular literacy promoted the use of the Estonian and enhanced its status. However, there were still inequities. The drawing power of the German language was rested in its higher status. Initially, Estonians had been willing to assimilate to gain social mobility. However, by the second half of the 19th century, well-educated Estonians (even those that were bilingual) were affirming their national identity; even though the Germans (notably clerics and scholars) had encouraged the development of the Estonian language, and though the serfs had been emancipated in Estonia and the Baltics decades earlier than in the rest of Russia, the German language and the German elite stood in the way of continued Estonian social advancement. Hiden and Salmon describe how, "Under the stimulus of industrialization there was a massive movement of population into the towns. Here there developed a new Latvian and Estonian bourgeoisie and proletariat which ultimately challenged the political supremacy of the Baltic Germans" (1991: 21). The emancipation of the serfs in the 19th century allowed for the emergence of a new Estonian intelligentsia and economic elite including property owners, merchants, minor officials, and a professional middle class of lawyers, teachers, and journalists, who came to challenge the hegemony of the Baltic Germans (Raun 1991: 73).

Russification actually benefited the rise of an Estonian middle class; in 1881, for example, Estonians comprised only 5% of the state bureaucracy in Estland and northern Livland, but by 1897, they were a slight majority of the regional civil servants (52%) employed by the Russian Empire (see Raun 1991: 73). Russification provided Estonians the ability to compete with Germans on an equal footing; both had to use a second language (Russian), whereas the language of the civil service was German prior to the Russification. Changes were also occurring in the countryside with the rise of a new intellectual elite: the elementary school teacher. Teachers were leading the national awakening, and their status was invariably tied to the teaching of the Estonian language. The

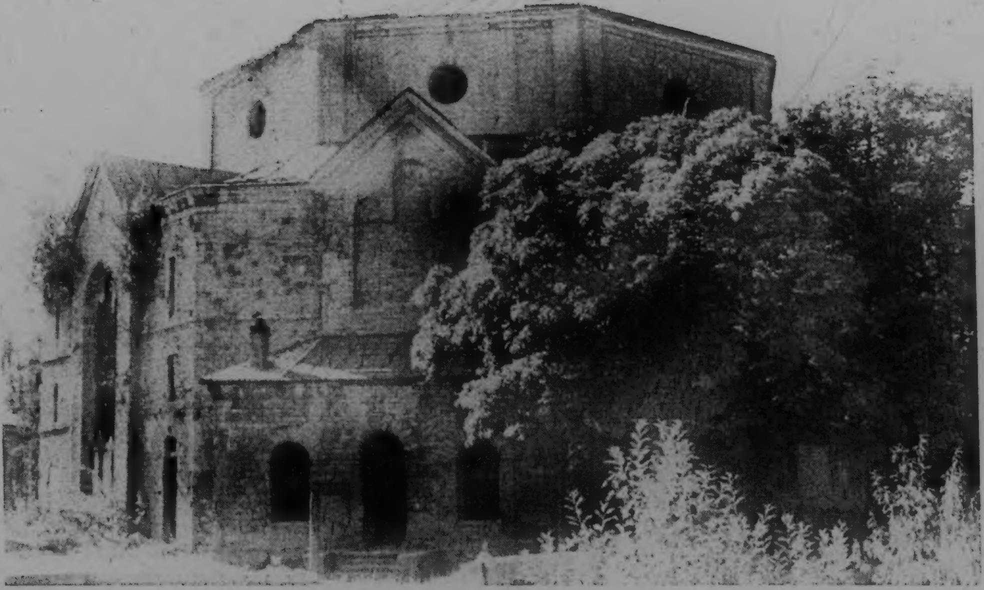

Figure 10: Ruins, Narva

Baltic Germans were thus left in an unenviable position, as "An alliance with the tsarist regime and its Russification policy would have meant the destruction of the German identity in the Baltic provinces. The alternative of uniting with the Estonian and Latvian urban and rural bourgeoisie was, in effect, forbidden by the St. Petersburg [Russian] government" (Raun 1991: 63). Raun also notes that the Germans could not overcome their sense of cultural superiority and could not accept the Baltic natives as equal partners (1991: 63).

Given that Russification in the Baltics was aimed at the power of the Baltic Germans, it served to enhance the status of the Estonian language within Estonia, if only by demoting the German language:

> However, despite the religious affinities between rulers and ruled in the Baltic provinces, the Estonians and Latvians still had to engage in a political campaign on two fronts. The first was against the German monopoly of political, social and economic power. On one level they were aided by Russification, which undermined the power of the *Ritterschaften* (the German nobility). Tsarist Russification policies included the introduction of the Russian municipal constitution in 1882, the abolition of local criminal and civil law codes and their replacement with Russian laws and finally the Russification of the Education system starting with schools in 1887 and the University of Dorpat in 1893 that was a German-language institution. These measures were greeted with favor by many Estonians, but at the same time they did not wish to loosen the German grip only to have it replaced by the iron hand of tsarism (Raun 1991: 18).

In the second half of the 19th century, the Estonian 'national awakening' was coming to terms with German hegemony; certain people sought to conciliate relations with the Baltic Germans, while others rejected German dominance and sought to use the tsar and central government to undermine German hegemony. Raun downplays the negative impacts of Russification on the Estonians and notes that it has too often been overrated; when Russification policies were implemented, the Estonian culture and national identity were too strong and could resist assimilation. He notes that no systematic policy of Russification was ever carried out and that the cultural achievement of the Estonians was such that by the 1880s, denationalization was no longer a serious threat (1991: 66). By the end of the century, the Estonian intelligentsia had overcome the pessimism that had undermined its confidence in the 1880s and 1890s; "By the start of the twentieth century a renewed sense of self-confidence was appearing among the Estonian intelligentsia" (Raun 1991: 67).

Narva

Narva was a growing industrial centre at the end of the 19th century. From 1860 to 1900, the population grew from an estimated 6,500 people to 24,000. The growth of the textile industry in Narva was facilitated by the railroad. In 1870, the first railroad was built in the Baltic region linking St. Petersburg, Narva, Tallinn, and Paldiski. With industrialization, Narva attracted a large number of Russian workers from the surrounding countryside; by 1934, ethnic Russians represented 29.7% of the city's population, and the surrounding countryside had a sizable Russian minority. The only region that had a higher concentration of Russians was the Eastern district of Petserimaa, where Russians formed a majority (65%).

This early history would shape Soviet policy, as Narva continued to serve as an important transit point and, along with Tallinn, was heavily industrialized during the Soviet period.

Revolution and Independence

The renewed sense of Estonian self-confidence coincided with a rise in revolutionary activity in the Russian Empire, a process marked by the 1905 Revolution, when Estonians seized the opportunity to exact revenge on the German nobility. In this revolutionary year, with the breakdown of tsarist authority, ethnic Estonian peasants attacked and burned manor houses, and Baltic German landlords and clerics were killed. Tsarist authority was asserted with the repression of the uprising, but the tenuous status of the Baltic Germans was revealed; "The Baltic German nobility were revealed as an isolated caste, relics of a medieval pattern of colonization which had made them rulers not of German farmers, but of an alien peasantry. The old patriarchal society of the Baltic provinces had disappeared never to return" (Hiden and Salmon 1991: 21-22).

Though the Revolution did not institute a Constitutional Monarchy, it did lead to greater liberalization. In the decade between the 1905 Revolution and the onset of World War I, the national awakening continued in earnest as Russification policies were repealed, and Estonians elected representatives to the newly created imperial parliament (Duma). The Estonian intelligentsia sought to improve the status of the Estonian language and culture, and sought to ensure a

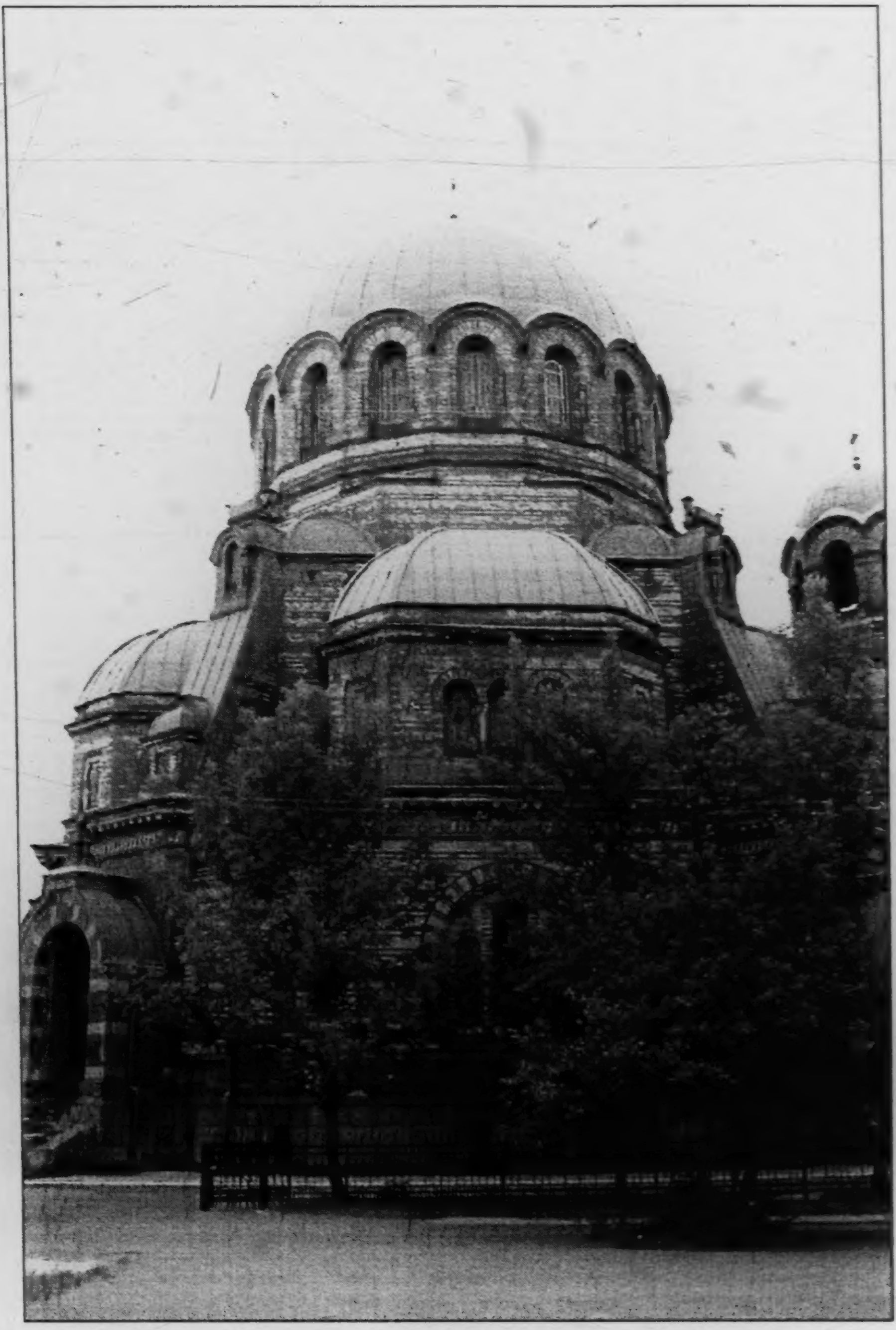

Figure 11: Orthodox Church, Narva (Only Church to survive Soviet bombing of the city in World War II)

more equitable redistribution of the land via the sale of land from large estates—owned by Baltic Germans—at fair prices. Otherwise, the Estonian intelligentsia were very conservative in their political views; in fact, "All Estonian intellectuals expressed absolute loyalty to the Tsar and could conceive of no other form of government than the Russian empire" (Raun 1991: 66). Raun posits that the ideal world of the Estonian intelligentsia was a rural world in which farmers practiced scientific farming and could increase landholding through the purchase and sale of privately owned land. The German nobility remained the 'other' that continued to own what was thought to be a disproportionate share of the arable land. Up to World War I, the large estates—under the jurisdiction of the Baltic German nobility—held about 58% of the rural land; up to two-thirds of the Estonian peasantry either remained landless or had a minimal amount of land (Raun 1991: 69).

The First World War and the Russian Revolution opened the door to the unexpected creation of the three independent Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania):

> The border states [of the Russian Empire] which achieved independence between 1917 and 1920 did so as a result of the collapse of empires rather than of their own volition. After the national state had finally been established and recognized, independence was usually hailed as the culmination of a long process of conscious striving to fulfill the nation's destiny; but that says more about the need to consolidate and unite the people around a set of values and symbols than it reflects the actual reality (Kirby 1995: 288).

As noted above, full independence was not a goal of the Estonian intelligentsia, but when the opportunity presented itself, the Estonian political and social elite snatched the opportunity to gain Estonia's political independence. The Western powers recognized the independence of the three states. Estonia quite easily reached an agreement with Latvia on the common border; only one location was in contention, and this problem was sent to Great Britain for mediation. On February 2, 1920, Estonia signed a peace treaty with the Soviet Union (Tartu Treaty). The northern border was set to the east of Narva and the Narva River. This ended fourteen months of warfare with the Soviet Union. Estonia gained some additional land to the south, including territory inhabited by the Setu, an Orthodox Finno-Ugric people related to the Estonian population and considered a distinct ethnic group.

With independence, Estonians adopted radical measures to redistribute the land to Estonian farmers. The Estonian constituent assembly rejected all forms of compromise and on October 10, 1919, adopted a law expropriating virtually all the landed estates—lands owned by the Baltic German nobility—and redistributing them to Estonian farmers. Years later, Estonia agreed to compensate the estate owners, but the sums given represented only a tiny fraction of the value of the estates (Kirby 1995: 299). The new state promoted the interests of the Estonian farming class, as this was seen as being in the national interest. According to Kirby, "A strong 'peasantist' ethos, which sought to create a nation of small farmers imbued with patriotic zeal and impervious to the siren songs of deracinated Reds and the demoralized proletariat of the big factories, pervaded much of the debate on land reform, sometimes to the detriment of agriculture as a whole" (1995: 299). Industry declined due to devastation of war and the loss of market:

> The large factories in Tallinn and Narva were geared to tsarist military and naval uses or to the Russian market, which no longer could be easily reached. Trade with the USSR flourished for a while but then tapered off because of Soviet attempts at autarky. Industry had to be diversified and reduced in scale to suit the smaller domestic market. The number of industrial workers decreased"(Taagepera 1993: 51).

A case in point is Narva's textile industry; Narva had developed an important textile industry dating back to the 18th century, but flourishing in the final decades of the 19th century. Kreenholm textile mills in Narva housed the world's biggest cotton works (see Hiden and Salmon 1991: 77). With the loss of its primary markets, Narva's textile industry declined following Estonia's independence.

With independence, Estonia established a democratic government controlled by Estonians. In the new republic, ethnic Estonians comprised close to 90% of the republic's population:

> There was no need to forge a new and somewhat artificial nation out of disparate parts of a colonial territory, because the Estonian-speaking population (88 percent of the total) already had a common national consciousness. An educated elite already existed, and literacy was universal (Taagepera 1993: 50).

Minorities in inter-war Estonia included: Russians—8% of the population; Germans—1.5%; Jews—0.5%; and Swedes—0.5%. In the new republic, the German hegemony had been broken, but the Estonian majority cannot be described as overly discriminatory, as "Participation of ethnic minorities in the elites was appreciable in the economy (Germans and Jews) but low in politics and the military" (Taagepera 1993: 51). Estonian cultural policies in the new republic were quite liberal by early 20th century global standards. The Estonian constitution had established provisions for cultural autonomy, which were offered to its cultural minorities. In fact, "Estonia went one step further in 1925, granting all national groups of more than 3,000 persons the right to constitute themselves as public corporations with their own cultural institutions. This highly-acclaimed act remained in force, though several of its provisions were violated by the Päts regime" (see Kirby 1995: 335).

Cultural autonomy benefited both German and Jewish communities, as these populations were not as territorially compact as the Russians and Swedes. Also, the German community benefited from financial support from Germany. Russians and Swedes lived in territorially compact regions and could ensure schooling in their languages at the regional level; in a sense, they achieved a degree of regional autonomy. The Russians were concentrated on the eastern frontier, whereas the Swedes inhabited offshore islands off the Estonian coast.

Of course, the new state promoted the development of the Estonian culture and language. As Raun points out, "The 1920s and 1930s brought to fruition the goal first enunciated during the national awakening: the creation of a modern and independent Estonian culture. The establishment of an Estonian-language educational system and of professional cultural institutions directed by themselves marked the beginning of a new era in Estonian culture" (1991: 133). Though Estonian schools existed in the past, the Estonian language became the primary language of instruction at all levels. The new administration of the Estonian state switched the language of instruction of Tartu University to the Estonian language; as well, the government founded a technical university in Tallinn and an Estonian Academy of Sciences. The Estonian state and the new academic institutions strove to modernize the Estonian language with the publication of an eight-volume universal encyclopedia, and world classics were translated into Estonian. This continued the efforts begun in previous decades to standardize the grammar and to expand the Estonian vocabulary to include new political, social, and cultural terms appropriate for a modern society. A new generation of writers and poets came to prominence, making use of the more developed language and thereby promoting the use of Estonian for both education and literary creation. A campaign was also launched to encourage the ethnic Estonian population to Estonianize family names, abandoning their Germanic names. Writers such as novelist A. H. Tammsaare (1878-1940) and poet Marie Under (1883-1980) made use of this modernized language. All told, the Estonian state invested the Estonian language and culture with greater symbolic capital, effectively ensuring that the German language and culture would not regain the preeminence it had enjoyed in the history of Estonia (Taagepera 1993: 52).

Soviet Occupation

On August 23, 1939, Germany's foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, landed in Moscow. Within a day of landing, he and the Soviet foreign minister, Viacheslav M. Molotov, signed a non-aggression pact and secret protocol as to how Germany and the Soviet Union would carve up Eastern and Central Europe among themselves. Nine days later, German forces invaded Poland. On September 17 of the same year, Soviet forces moved into Eastern Poland and captured Vilna (Vilnius, now the Lithuanian capital). Following the invasion of Poland, Germany and the Soviet Union negotiated the fate of Lithuania, a territory prized by both. The Baltic States were pressured to sign non-aggression treaties and to allow Soviet troops to be stationed in their territories. A similar treaty was negotiated with Finland, but the Finnish government refused to allow Soviet troops to be stationed on Finnish territory. Using the pretext of a 'border incident,' the Red Army attacked Finland, but Soviet invaders were stopped, and thousands of Russian soldiers were captured. The Red Army kept Karelia, the territory to the east of Finland, but did not succeed in invading what is now Finland. On March 13, 1940, a peace treaty was signed, ensuring that Finland would not become a 'Soviet Republic' after the end of the war. Estonia, however, was not as fortunate.

Following the secret protocols of the pact signed with Germany, the intention of the Soviet state was clear: it wanted to integrate the Baltic states into the Soviet Union. This would be achieved by having the states 'voluntarily' join the Soviet Union through the use of force. In 1939, Estonia was pressured to accept the placement of Soviet Red Army troops in Estonian bases following a 'mutual assistance' pact. In October of the same year, Estonia's centuries-old Baltic German population suddenly emigrated en masse. This led to a certain degree of local satisfaction; that the Estonians' historic rivals had left, and the final grip of the German culture was broken. Despite this, however, some questioned what had led to such a rapid emigration from Estonia (Raun 1991: 143). Moreover, the Estonians now had to deal with Soviet demands.

As Raun notes, the Estonian government hoped that the Soviet State would be satisfied with the Soviet bases on Estonian soil. He writes that "The basic principle of Estonian foreign policy was to avoid provoking the Soviet Union into making any further demands" (1991: 142). However, as Germany invaded France, the Soviet Union quickly moved to integrate the Baltic States into the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union delivered an ultimatum to the Baltic States alleging that they were collaborating against the Soviet Union and demanded that they agree within 8.5 hours to establish governments acceptable to the Soviet State. Soviet Emissaries and the Red Army were sent to the region. On June 17, 1940, Soviet troops began to enter Estonia through Narva; within two days, some 90,000 troops entered the Republic, joining the 25,000 soldiers already stationed there. A few days later, on June 21, "spontaneous" demonstrators—mainly Russian soldiers in civilian dress or Soviet workers that were shipped into the region—marched through Tallinn. Within a few weeks, elections were held and pro-Soviet governments were elected, and within days they "proclaimed Soviet power in Estonia" and "declared Estonia's desire to become a member republic of the USSR" (Raun 1991: 145). As Kirby notes, "the task of these high-ranking emissaries (V.G. Dekanozov in Kaunas, Andrey Zhdanov in Tallinn) was to supervise the formation of popular 'revolutions'. Elections were hurriedly arranged and held in July [1940], after all likely sources of opposition had been stifled by arrests, deportations and much chicanery, and the docile assemblies duly elected voted on 21-22 July to apply for admission to the USSR, a request granted by the Supreme Soviet at the beginning of August" (1995: 357). The Soviets would remain in the Baltics for close to a year before the German army occupied the Baltic.

On June 22, 1941, German forces invaded the Soviet Union and the Baltic States; by the end of August, Germany controlled the Baltic States and had set up their own administration in the conquered region. The attempts by Estonians to convince the Germans to establish a "modified restoration of sovereignty" failed (Kirby 1995: 358). The German ideal—including that of Baltic Germans like Alfred Rosenberg—was to deport the indigenous population and replace it with German colonizers, but this was put on hold as the war raged on with the Soviet Union. The Baltic's Jewish population was no so fortunate; the Jews of the Baltic Region—including the sizeable Jewish communities of Riga and Kaunas—were either killed or sent to the concentration camps. Estonians fared better, but Germans did not see the Baltic peoples as equals; "Their racial arrogance precluded any serious attempt to win the confidence and support of the local population" (Kirby 1995: 359). Soviet reoccupation of the Baltic region occurred in 1944, when the Soviet Red Army broke through German forces and occupied Tallinn on September 22. From there, the Soviet military reoccupied the Baltic States, which were reintegrated into the Soviet Union. Resistance to Soviet occupation continued for close to a decade, but Estonia remained a Soviet Republic for nearly to five decades.

Sovietization

Following the war, the Soviet Union began transforming the Baltic States into 'normal' Soviet Republics by instituting Soviet policies that would, in effect, radically transform Estonian society. Though the Soviet State had 'solved' the nationalities problem and claimed to have freed nations from the Tsarist prison of nations, Soviet policies mirrored many Imperial Russian practices, notably in the protection of the western borders by fostering greater homogeneity with the rest of the Soviet Empire. Taagepera tells us how, "In the Estonian context, Sovietization meant pursuit of two goals: state socialism and Russification. Both goals were quite evident from policy statements and actual practices from 1940 on" (1993: 106). Given the predominantly rural population and the importance of farming in Estonia, collectivization was a primary policy objective of the Soviet State. For the first few years, Soviet officials practiced a form of voluntary collectivization in which independent farmers were encouraged to join collectives and state farms. However, by the end of 1947, only 8% of farms were collectivized. If the Estonian farmers were going to be collectivized, drastic measures were required—measures that were eventually implemented at the end of the 1940s. In March 1949, at least 20,000 people—mainly farmers—were deported to Russia and Kazakhstan. Within one month, the rate of collectivization had jumped from 8% to 64% and was nearly complete in 1950, with close to 92% of all farms being collectivized. Within a few years, the remaining free farmers had given up (see Taagepera 1993: 81). Collective farms in Estonia produced less, and collective farmers had to survive on what they could produce on small plots of land. However, collective farms conformed to Soviet ideology and also ensured that the population would be easier to control. Collectivization, for example, cut off the supply of food and goods to the guerilla resistance still fighting the Soviet invaders in the late 1940s.

The Purges

The Soviet State strictly controlled political life in Estonia, and the political regime was particularly repressive in the final years before the death of Stalin. In 1950-1951, the upper ranks of the Communist Party of Estonia leadership was purged; the First Secretary of the CPE was dismissed and replaced by a Russian Estonian whose family had moved to Saint Petersburg in 1910. Hundreds of officials and intellectuals were accused, among other things, of 'reactionary bourgeois nationalist ideas' and deported to labour camps. Russian

Estonians came to dominate the upper echelons of the CPE, and by late 1952, not one Estonian born in Estonia remained as CPE secretary or as minister of the Republic. The Russian Estonians[25]—sometimes referred to as the 'Yestonians' because of their accent and inability to speak 'their' language fluently—held key positions of power until the 1980s, as it was Brezhnev's policy to give lifelong job security for upper cadres in exchange for loyalty. Cultural production was likewise stifled in the final years of Stalinism.

Industrialization and Immigration

Along with collectivization, the Soviet State aggressively pursued a policy of industrialization in the Baltic region. The main areas of industrialization were Tallinn and the Northeast (including Narva). The new factories were integrated into the larger Soviet infrastructure and were producing goods destined for larger Soviet markets. In Estonia, industrialization was a form of Russification in the sense that it changed the ethnic make-up of the Estonian Republic. Rather than drawing on the local population to work in the new factories, the Soviet state encouraged migration from other regions of the Soviet Union. This migration was both voluntary and forced. From an estimated high of 97.3% in 1945, the proportion of ethnic Estonians in Estonia dropped to 72% in 1953 and continued to drop over the years to a low of 61.5% in 1989. The relative decline of the ethnic Estonians was due to demographic factors, with the Estonian population's low birth rates compounded by immigration to Estonia from other regions. Whereas the ethnic Estonian proportion of the population declined, the proportion of ethnic Russians almost quadrupled from 8% to 30.3% of the total population. In addition, the in-migration included large numbers of immigrants who, due to the Soviet social and education structure, adopted Russian as their *lingua franca*; these include Ukrainians (3.1%) and Belarusians (1.8%). The ethnic transformation was not as drastic as in Latvia, where ethnic Latvians came close to becoming a minority as the proportions of Latvians dropped from 77% of the total to 52% in 1989. In both countries, the migrant population was concentrated in the capitals and other industrial centres. In 1989, ethnic Estonians represented only 47.4% of the total population of Tallinn, Estonia's capital and largest city. In Narva, ethnic Estonians represented only 4.0% of the total population in 1989. (see Raun 1991)

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[25] The "Russian Estonians" were ethnic Estonians who had either been born or raised in the Soviet Union or who had spent the past decades in the Soviet Union and had thus been largely assimilated. Prior to the Russian Revolution, ethnic Estonians had moved East for the promise of land and after the Revolution a number of Estonian Communists fled to the Soviet Union. These "Estonians" were considered more trustworthy to govern the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic than those who had lived in the independent Estonian Republic.

Russification

The Soviet Union was faced with a common linguistic challenge: how to cope with the *necessity* of bridging the linguistic communities (over one hundred) inhabiting its territory. As John Edwards notes, the necessity of promoting a common *lingua franca* to allow efficient communication will invariably move languages from contact to conflict, as there is an underlying tension between the necessity to overcome linguistic diversity to ensure intercommunity and interpersonal communication and the desire of individuals to maintain one's 'own' language (1994: 53). Edwards notes that there have always existed powerful languages that served this function of bridging national groups and language communities (1994: 40).

A *lingua franca* invariably imposes itself through economic, political and military might as opposed to any inherent linguistic superiority (1994: 40). Though such languages may be necessary to ensure effective communication, especially in administrating a large state, this will not ensure the acceptance of the *lingua franca*; in fact, "communicative necessity often sits uneasily with the powerful sentiments attached to maternal varieties: there is a strong tension, then, between the pull of parochialism—and the special perspective on the world which is often seen to be uniquely associated with a first language—and the very obvious attractions and rewards of moving out of the shadow of *le clocher*" (1994: 204). This tension will be reinforced when the *lingua franca* is associated with conquest or social domination, and when its use threatens personal or group identity. Edwards characterizes this tension as a struggle between 'parochialism and intercourse,' whereas Ivan Dzyuba, a Ukrainian dissident writing in the Soviet Union, frames the conflict in terms of 'Internationalism or Russification.' Calling upon Lenin, he sums up the question quite succinctly as follows: "And let us note: in such cases Lenin always spoke about *learning* the Russian language and becoming familiar with it (which is quite understandable and doubtless necessary), and not about the replacement and displacement of the national languages, against which he spoke out indignantly" (1974: 183). Dzyuba was not opposed to bilingualism per se, but rather the "facts of denationalization and the loss of native identity" as he believes that language is "intrinsically linked with the deepest sources and most subtle manifestations of individual and social spiritual life" (1974: 152). What he condemned was Russian chauvinism and the ensuing 'Ukrainophobia' that was found in those Ukrainians who renounced their native language (see Dzyuba 1974: 151).

Whether it was for reasons of internationalism, necessity, or due to Russian chauvinism, Russification was less a question of banning the use of other languages than an attempt to provide greater status to the 'international' Russian language that was to serve as the common Soviet *lingua franca*. The selection of Russian as a *lingua franca* would certainly have seemed natural to the Soviet administrators, as Russians were the largest linguistic community and decidedly dominant in the social and political administration of the Soviet State. However, the promotion of the Russian language was more than a question of efficiency. To borrow the ideas of Bourdieu, it was an effort to endow the Russian language with greater social capital:

> Linguistic exchange—a relation of communication between a sender and a receiver, based on enciphering and deciphering, and therefore on the implementation of a code or a generative competence—is also an economic exchange which is established within a particular symbolic relation of power between a producer, endowed with a certain linguistic capital, and a consumer (or market), and which is capable of procuring a certain material or symbolic profit (1991: 66).

The Soviet Union was entering a market in which a certain linguistic doxa had been established, thus, as Bourdieu recognizes, engendering resistance against "those who, occupying a dominant position in the space thus divided, have an interest in perpetuating a doxic relation to the social world which leads to the acceptance of established divisions as natural or to their symbolic denial through the affirmation of a higher unity (national, familial, etc)" (1991: 130).

This process of Soviet Russification—in essence, the creation of a new symbolic order that changed the relative symbolic value of languages in Estonia—was seen as oppressive by many Estonian speakers. Taagepera sates, "although in the USSR the term *stagnation* has come to characterize the late Brezhnev era, I prefer to use *suffocation* for Estonia because of the almost painlessly slow but relentless squeeze on the national psyche through colonization and infringement of the Russian language on ever-new aspects of social life" (1993: 97-98). The Russian language was given greater status in a number of ways. Russians and other migrants moving to Estonia could send their children to Russian schools, but if an individual left his or her titular republic, there was no provision for any schooling in his or her language; Estonians (and others) were expected to learn Russian as a second-language, but Russians in Estonia were not faced with any pressure to learn to speak Estonian. In this way, Russian was a *lingua franca* required for social mobility because the higher an individual rose in Soviet society—even within his or her republic—the greater the pressure to fluently speak the Russian language. Because of unequal production of cultural goods in Estonia and throughout the Soviet Union, the Russian language predominated in the sphere of cultural production. Although there were books, magazines, films, and television programmes in other languages, Russian-language cultural products flooded the Soviet Union; 75% of television programmes available in Estonia during the Brezhnev years were in Russian (Taagepera 1993: 99).

Central to Russification was the teaching of Russian in Estonian schools. As John Edwards (1994) notes, a school is a powerful and visible instrument of the state that can be used to assimilate linguistic minorities (or even majorities). It is also central to the maintenance and promotion of collective identity: "Just as the school exists as an arm of the state, so it is often singled out by language communities as the linchpin of their continuing cultural and linguistic identity" (Edwards 1994: 11). One of the sources of cultural unrest in Estonia was the importance accorded to the teaching of Estonian. In the 1960s, the Soviet state wanted to restore a ten-year cycle for the elementary and high school education. This elicited official protests from such organizations as the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic Union of Writers, who argued that Estonian schools needed the extra year as student had to learn three languages: Estonian, Russian, and a foreign language. Then, in the early 1980s, Soviet policies of introducing the study of Russian in the first grade, and then in preschools, led to Estonian resentment, especially as Estonians schools taught a great deal more Russian than the Russian schools in Estonia taught the indigenous language: 41 hours per week of Russian-language instruction for Estonians as opposed to 16 hours of Estonian-language instruction in Russian-language schools in Estonia. Raun notes that "Perhaps in response to the ethnic unrest in Estonia at the beginning of the 1980s, the Soviet authorities took some steps to improve the study of Estonian in Russian-language schools, including the establishment of Estonian-language Olympiads for Russian students" (1991: 212). However, given the unequal actual and symbolic status of the Estonian and Russian languages, this did little to improve the knowledge of the Estonian language among Russians.

The Failure of Sovietization

Unlike other regions (notably Belarus, see Marples 1999), Estonia was never 'denationalized'; though Estonians did learn Russian as a compulsory second language, ethnic Estonians maintained the Estonian language as their primary language. Even the 'Russian Estonians,' individuals who had been more comfortable speaking Russian than Estonian, were assimilated to Estonian in that they regained their fluency. Exogamous marriages between ethnic Estonians and Russian-speakers (whether ethnic Russians or individuals from other nationalities) were rare, and the children of mixed marriages tended to opt for official Estonian nationality. When both parents were Estonian, the children would invariably learn Estonian as their primary language. The greatest threat to the predominance of the Estonian language in Estonia was the continued migration of Russian speakers from other regions of the Soviet Union; however, the falling birth rates in Central

Russia meant that the ethnic Russian population was shrinking as a proportion of the total Soviet population. Much higher birth rates in Central Asia and other predominantly rural regions of the Soviet Union risked making the ethnic Russians a minority within the Soviet Union.

The Soviet failure in Estonia is also attributable to the strength of nationhood when it has been fully ‘awakened.’ Estonians were able to maintain certain traditions even when Soviet power was most repressive. Song festivals continued, as these were acceptable to Soviet policy as they were “national in form, socialist in content” (Raun 1991: 188). They allowed large numbers to congregate. For example, in 1947, there were 28,000 participants in the 12th all-Estonian song festival, and over 100,000 spectators came out to listen to Estonian music. Also, in 1950, when the purge of ‘bourgeois nationalists’ was under way, 30,700 performers participated in the festival, which made it one of the biggest festivals ever organized. Though the festival integrated songs in praise of Lenin, Stalin, and the Revolution, subtle manifestations of Estonian nationhood were expressed, including the 1947 rendition of *Mu isamaa on minu arm* or *My fatherland is my love* (see Raun 1991: 188). As Raun states, “in many ways this powerful musical tradition, reaching back to the national awakening, transcended even the restrictions of the Stalinist era” (1991: 188). In a few decades, the song festivals would play an important role in mobilizing the Estonian population and bringing an end to Soviet rule.

The Road to Independence

After decades of repression and stagnation, the death of Brezhnev and the eventual rise to power of Mikhail Gorbachev would radically transform the Soviet Union and lead to the independence of Estonia. Gorbachev, after coming to power in 1985, launched a program of *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost'* (openness) in order to reform the Soviet structure, which also led to the first tentative steps taken by Estonians; within a few years, the changes put forward in Estonia were rapid and revolutionary. In 1987, the population organized to contest the planned phosphate mine in north-central Estonia, which was seen as threatening the environment and much of Estonia's drinking water. Later that year, a large demonstration was organized denouncing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The next year, in April 1988, a *popular front* was organized as a democratic movement to support restructuring. That summer, the traditional tricolor flag (blue, black and white) was flying in Tartu. This flag of the Independent Republic of Estonia was repressed during Soviet times, and its raising served to flaunt Soviet taboos. A few months later, the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet declared Estonia sovereign in November 1988. Condemned by Moscow, this declaration of sovereignty did not entail Estonian independence but meant that Estonian laws would have primacy over all-Union legislation (Raun 1991: 227-228).

John Edwards states that "it is quite apparent that languages in contact can become languages in conflict" (1994: 89), and in Estonia, the language question emerged in the tumultuous political revolution that was underway in the late 1980s. The Estonian Supreme Soviet adopted the Estonian language as the official state language in December 1988. One month later, it passed a language law that required all individuals whose work entailed direct contact with the public to become proficient in Estonian within four years. The law defined six levels of proficiency, depending on the education rate required for a given position. Though the law did promote the use of Estonian, concessions were made to the Russian language; it was to remain a language of the state administration, and workers with no contact with the population (a factory worker in Narva, for example) were not required to know Estonian (Raun 1991: 237).

The Estonian legislature also pursued its own *glasnost'* policies, and in 1989, a new high-school textbook was published, recounting in detail the repressed history of the Soviet occupation and subsequent deportations. The history of the independent interwar Republic of Estonia was portrayed in positive terms. The mandatory study of Marxism-Leninism, scientific communism, and other such courses were dropped from the academic curriculum at Tartu University, while historical monuments were restored. In fact, "The Estonian Heritage Society played a major role in this process by restoring historical monuments to the War of Independence that had either been destroyed by the Soviets or hidden by the local population. Twenty-seven such monuments reappeared in 1988 and fifty more in 1989; by August 1990 more than half of the approximately two hundred independence-era memorials were back in place"

(Raun 1991: 236).

Conclusion

In 1991, the failed *putsch* in Moscow led to what would have been unthinkable a generation ago: the independence of the Estonian Republic. Unlike the events of 1917, Estonia was ready. In the spring of 1991, 77.83% of Estonians voting in a nonbinding referendum voted in support of independence. Voter turnout was high—82.85% of eligible voters—and, as could be expected, virtually all ethnic Estonians voted in favour of independence. Surprisingly, a large minority of non-Estonians—30%—supported independence. When reactionary communists failed to seize power, and the Soviet Union was dissolved, Estonia regained its independence. The Republic had to deal with a different legacy: that of the Soviet Union. Of great importance to this research is the large Russian-speaking population that remained in Estonia, particularly in the city of Narva. In the following chapters, I will examine the Russians in Narva as I seek to describe how concepts of nation and nationhood shape the actions and narratives of Russians in the Estonian Republic. I will argue that Russian nationhood is not a simple state construct, but rather a curated community that defines itself in relation to a local space: the city of Narva. To understand this curated community, I will explore ideas of Russian soul and character, the ways graveyards are used to define sacred and national space, and the ways in which nationhood is understood in the context of economic competition between Russian-speakers and Estonians in the Estonian state. My goal is to produce a nuanced understanding of nationality and nationhood, and by extension nationalism—the articulation of the political and the national—in the post-Soviet landscape.

Chapter Two

The Nation on Display: Curating Nationhood

Nations were not solely imagined or invented; I propose a more precise term: *curated.* This is to say that elements of history and culture were collected, cleaned, restored and put on display to the peasantry to ground them in particular nations and their corresponding national territory. The *curated* nation could be called a construction—it is not a primordial unchanging entity but one historically assembled in a discourse that draws upon much older precedents. It is a longitudinal process by which nations constitute and reconstitute themselves over time. That is, nations are founded upon the scavenged artifacts of earlier forms of community and reified in the same ways that history and culture and art are reified in museums. It is by selecting elements of history, art, folklore, and other cultural expressions, which are then woven together in nation, that the nation emerges. Museums play a role in *curating* the nation, but they are not alone in the task. Especially important are poets and writers, since they can with their works personify the nation in their poetry and prose, even if they are not conscious of this action. This is clearly seen in the history of the 'national awakening' in Estonia. The curators of the 19th and early 20th centuries worked to collect, record, and catalogue the history of the nation. Their efforts provided the basis for the 'banal nationalism' of later Estonians, as will be discussed in this chapter.

Likewise, the contemporary Russian nation would have been unimaginable without the likes of Pushkin and Dostoevsky. But the process of curation builds upon the work of much older institutions, such as the Russian Orthodox Church. If nations are successfully curated, nationalism is possible, with nationalism being a form of political action based on the premise that nations exist and that the fates of nations and states are intertwined. In the Soviet Union, memories of war were curated as a particular understanding of the Second World War, known as the Great Patriotic War in Russian. War was promoted by the state with the "people" depicted as nobly fighting and vanquishing Fascist invaders. In recent years the process of *curation* has continued with the building of new monuments in Russia and the conflict over Soviet war monuments in Estonia.

Benedict Anderson, in his introduction to *Imagined Communities,* writes that though nationalism has exerted an immense influence on the modern world, the theory of nationalism has been conspicuously meager (1991: 3). Though much has been published since the appearance of this seminal work, modern theory has yet to present a thorough understanding of modern nationalism. The fundamental question is: how does the nation as community provide a sense of meaning to those who see themselves as belonging to this particular construct? Researchers such as Benedict Anderson, Richard Handler (1988), Eric Hobsbawm (1992), and many others provide partial explanations of the phenomenon, but do not go quite far enough in their analyses. Benedict Anderson (1991) does, however, provide one of the best explanations of nationalism, acknowledging that the nation provides individuals the possibility of immortality. Adrian Hastings, critical of the modernist assertions of nationhood, provides an insightful look at the role of religion in the formulation of nationalism and suggests that the Bible in some ways provided a template for the modern nation (1997).

I prefer to present the act of awakening nations as a form of curation rather than simply an act of invention; the actions of individuals who are actively curating nationhood are not counterfeit, as an individual can sincerely believe they are preserving, recording, or cataloguing without any pretense and would reject the suggestion that they are creating or inventing the reality they are representing in displays and manuscripts. An inventor is aware of the act of invention and is fully aware that she or he is creating something new, but the same cannot be said of a curator or other ‘national awakener.’ Perhaps there were some cynical national awakeners who were aware that they were constructing nations, but in all likelihood, most were simply acting in good faith, as true believers in the existence of their nation, and were unaware of the repercussions of their actions.

Alexander Motyl examines with philosophical precision the premise that nations and national identities are invented or imagined. He dissects the meaning of invention and imagination and questions the premise that elites construct nations and national identities. Motyl is critical of ‘constructivists’ such as Anderson (1983) and Hobsbawm (1992), declaring Hobsbawm’s definition of the invention of nation and national identity as “confused and confusing,” and though he affirms that Anderson does better, he nonetheless "leaves us without a clear sense of what imagination entails" (1999: 69). Likewise, examines the possibility that nations existed before the word nation or before the doctrine of nationalism. In his words: "To suppose otherwise is either to conflate the etymology of the word nation with the origins of the phenomenon, as Liah Greenfeld [1992: 4-8] does, or to reduce the phenomenon to a word or words, or a 'stance' as Rogers Brubaker [1996: 3-14] does" (Motyl 1999: 71). Motyl argues that there is no logical reason for national identity to be formed as the result of conscious elite activity and accepted by the masses (1999: 74). Rather, Motyl argues that both national myths and traditions can emerge without elites (1999: 75). He then argues that national propositions are not straightforward constructs and that the act of construction need not be a conscious act. Rather, he proposes, "in the spirit of Anthony Smith and Frederik Barth—that national identity be seen as a coherent package of propositions relating to historicity and boundaries. Historicity provides a nation with a place in the flow of time, whereas boundaries grant it present-day distinctiveness" (1999: 77). Moreover, historicity does not solely refer to the past: it can also refer to the present and to a projected future. All nations would stake out a claim to their place in history (and by extension their place in the future), and all national identities—whether civic or ethnic—would be exclusionary as there would be a need to trace boundaries.

This definition that Motyl proposes serves to differentiate his conceptual framework with that of Anthony D. Smith; he sees no 'meaningful difference' between an ethnie (ethnic group) and a nation, rather arguing that both "accept propositions about their place in history and both draw boundaries" and thus all nations are ethnic nations as the terms ethnic and nation are "conceptually synonymous" (1999: 78). It also does not oblige all nations to be modern, as "A nation, then, exists, or comes into being, when people sharing a lifeworld believe in a set of logically complementary propositions regarding historicity and otherness" (Smith 1999: 78). As is the case with Hastings, Motyl sees in Israel how "The ancient Israelites, whose national belief system provided them with a distinct place in time and space, were as much of a nation as most contemporary nations." He also includes the Romans and the Byzantine Greeks in this definition as well, with their origin myths and a strong distaste of the "other" (Motyl 1999: 99). Rather than arguing that modernity creates nations, Motyl proposes that modernity, with its incipient rise of secularism, modernization, market economies and democratic state, facilitates national identity formation, but is not necessarily a condition for nationhood. He argues that "Facilitating conditions are not sufficient conditions, and actually attaining complementarity is an entirely different matter" (Motyl 1999: 99).

The metaphor proposed, that of curation as opposed to invention or imagination, resonates with Motyl's ideas. Innovative national awakeners do not necessarily have to invent traditions, a term coined by Eric Hobsbawm (1983). When a nation is being curated, it is merely necessary to select certain cultural expressions and have them represent the entire nation; in the words of Barth and

Motyl, it is an act of defining the boundaries and historicity of the nation. This is similar to what a museum tries to accomplish. Even the largest of museums can only display a small fraction of all available artifacts, so it must exhibit a limited number of examples that are representative of the whole. It is this act of representing that constitutes the whole as somehow existing in a bounded form. When a nation is being curated, certain elements are chosen to exemplify the nation. A case in point is the Estonian interest in folk dress. In that republic, a tourist can buy postcards with a photo of a man and woman dressed in particular folk dress representing a particular region of the state. It is also possible to buy dolls dressed in the 'traditional' garb. Estonian museums also have ths kind of authentic folk dress on display. Together, these various examples of Estonian traditional dress represent the general Estonian national folk dress and demonstrate the existence of an Estonian nation.

I use the neologism "to curate" since it more adequately describes the act of nation building. The noun curate refers to a priest, and the word curator in turn refers to a museum keeper or custodian of collections, but the word retains priestly connotations. The curator can be seen as religiously (or at least faithfully) preserving the past, or art, or important cultural artifacts. However, in recent decades, a number of researchers have examined the relationship between museums and nationalism, indicating that museums contribute to the construction of the nation (see Anderson, 1991; Funari, 1994; Blakey, 1989; Price and Price, 1997; Leon and Piatt, 1989; Lowenthal, 1989; Molyneaux, 1994, Wallace, 1989;

Walsh, 1992; Handler and Gable, 1997). I hold that museums are illustrative of the processes of nation building, since the very act of exhibiting in a museum reifies. This process is comparable to the action of a clock or watch; it would be difficult to imagine time as a series of seconds, minutes and hours without accurate timepieces that allow us to see the progression of time. Likewise, the museum allows us to conceptualize what is on display. The objects themselves may be real, but the very act of collecting, preserving, and displaying objects in an artificial and controlled setting creates additional meaning. Visitors are unaware of the subtle process by which a museum constructs new perceptions and fosters a belief that reality can be catalogued and presented in discrete exhibitions. The museum's artifacts are 'real,' and the has the illusion that she or he understands their meaning directly; these artifacts represent a discrete and observable reality. A history museum therefore helps reify history, while a national museum reifies the nation. The importance of the museum reaches beyond the physical building; it symbolizes the existence of a bounded historical entity and helps to indirectly shape the national identity of even those who may never visit a museum. Likewise, the museum artifacts often work their way into the larger through depiction in other more banal venues such as stamps, postcards, calendars, and other products widely distributed outside of the museum. Benedict Anderson recognized the importance of "museumizing imagination" in his revised edition of *Imagined Communities*. The museum creates a bounded and determinate reality (Anderson, 1991: 184).

If I were to use Hobsbawm's terminology, the Estonian folk dress is an invented tradition (1983). There would have been evolving styles of clothing throughout the region's history, and invariably the styles chosen as traditional would not be very ancient (see Handler, 1988). There would have been great diversity not only between regions, but also between families and even individuals. Like the tartans of Hugh Trevor-Roper's kilts, they would only have become more fixed—I would say *museumified*—at a later time (1983). Folklorists and museum curators invariably selected certain styles as representative of certain regions. It is obviously an act of creativity, but it is not simply an act of invention. What motivated turn-of-the-century folklorists was the belief that the folk culture was disappearing and required preservation; this precludes them from seeing themselves as inventing traditions. Nonetheless, they had to decide what was truly 'traditional' and often tried to find pure expressions of traditional folk culture by editing out what they perceived as modern corruption of the pure folk style (see Handler, 1988). Again, this is precisely what a curator would do in a traditional museum. However, it is not an act of invention, as the work or the folklorist presupposes the existence of folklore and folk dress even if these are not 'authentic' in the true sense of the term—they did not remain unchanged over the centuries.

With folklore, a similar process was underway. Folklore was collected by folklorists who then edited and often repackaged the folklore in the form of national epics such as Estonia's national epic *Kalevipoeg,* compiled by Fr. R.

Kreutzwald and printed in 1862. According to Mare Lott and Aile Möldre (1993), "The epic confirmed beliefs in Estonians dignity as a nation beside other nations, and at the same time aroused interest towards old stories and songs" (cited in the Estonia Country Guide website). It is evident that this national epic did not exist independently of the folklorist who acted as an unacknowledged author, composing an epic from edited fragments of folk tales he had collected. He was simply an excellent curator of Estonian folklore who contributed to the curation of the Estonian nation.

The success of nation building rests precisely on the fact that traditions are not necessarily invented. Adept national awakeners draw upon the cultural traditions of a particular population that are curated and repackaged as national traditions. The population can then recognize itself in the national construction that is presented. Motyl argues that "If, alternatively, the people are assumed to be indifferent to or ignorant of elite preferences, no reason exists to expect them to accept the veracity of propositions that represent novel additions to already functioning lifeworlds" (1999: 74). Elites could coerce the masses to have them accept their ideas of nationality, but as Motyl states, that "coercion decidedly is not construction" (1999: 74). The metaphor of curation implies that elites are involved as curators, yet it does not imply that they impose ideas of nationality through coercion or that they will necessarily succeed in curating the nation. I would argue that the process of promoting nationhood is much more subtle. Nations are invented in the sense that they are constructed in social narratives that rely on the curating of traditions and history in order to provide a sense of community that transcends the local. The fact that they incorporate elements of older imagined communities serves to legitimize these new constructs.

Michael Herzfeld (1997) provides an interesting critique of both Anderson and Gellner in proposing that nations are not the only imagined communities. Ethnic groups are likewise curated, though they do not necessarily have the resources of the state at their disposal. Where Herzfeld diverges from Anderson, Gellner, and Hobsbawn is that he does not adopt a top-down formulation that would impose an elite perspective on local identities (see Herzfeld, 1997: 5-6). According to Herzfeld, it is ironic that such a top-down perspective reproduces the very ideology it purports to question; "It says, in effect, that ordinary people have no impact on the form of their local nationalism: they are only followers" (Herzfeld, 1997: 6). Though the state has a great deal of power and can use a number of institutions to put forward specific social narratives of nationhood, there may be local resistance in the form of competing narratives that may either define the nation differently or reject it altogether. Nationalism is more than a question of drumming words into the heads of subjects (see Greenfeld, 1992: 203). Resistance is possible, as strong constructivism does not account for the fact that certain minorities have refused to join larger nations, even if this would have theoretically been possible: Ukrainians, for example, because of their history and—more importantly—the emergence of a distinct Ukrainian literature, never became Russians. There were also various other, smaller groups within the Russian Federation who never became Russian.

Michael Herzfeld's theoretical construct recognizes that it is possible for individuals under different circumstances to challenge the legitimacy of the state. As Herzfeld points out, "In the outpourings of nationalist historiography, moreover, ordinary people find the materials to construct a potentially infinite range of personal and collective pasts, some of which may run counter to the intentions of their nationalist exemplars" (1997: 24). In Russia, for example, the Pugachev rebels claimed that the Tsar was an impostor. They used the construction of the state to challenge that very same state. Likewise, the Old Believers in Russia always constituted an important community of non-conformists who maintained a different construction of what it meant to be Russian. For this reason, I prefer the metaphor of curating the nation. Even though the museum attempts to create a certain reality, it is not guaranteed that every visitor will interpret the exhibit as was intended by the curators, and visitors can even challenge the intended meaning of the display by reinterpreting the meaning of the artifacts. Richard Handler and Eric Gable demonstrated that there were two different guided tours occurring within the same 'living' museum at Colonial Williamsburg: those led by white Americans, and those led by African-Americans. The two presented a completely different interpretation of the American past, and consequently helped to reify both the white American and the African-American communities (1997).

Herzfeld's social poetics is an attempt to bridge the poetics of everyday interaction and the "grand dramas of pomp and historiography" (1997: 25). Like Herzfeld, I hold that it is essential to take into consideration the little poetics of everyday life; moreover, a conscientious anthropologist must not exclude the concerns of individuals. Herzfeld's theory does not claim, though, to replace other approaches; "Rather, it occupies a militant middle ground between the twin denials of social experience—the extremes of positivism and deconstructionism—allowing neither to elide the intimate concerns of ordinary people in the name of fatuously self-serving abstractions" (1997: 25). Likewise, Motyl proposes a middle ground occupying the epistemological terrain between extreme constructivism and extreme primordialism.

Extreme constructivism would be characterized by the claim that nationalism as a discourse is real but that nations are merely discursive constructs—in essence words or empty signifiers. The extreme constructivism would be characterized, according to Motyl, by the work of Rogers Brubaker (1996) who argues for "an extreme constructivism par excellence" (Motyl 1999: 92). Weak constructivism, in contrast, claims that nations are constructs that emerge in modern times. Motyl classifies the work of Ernest Gellner (1983) as a form of weak constructivism. Motyl privileges a weak form of primordialism, which he defines as "a conceptualism enterprise that insists that nations are human collectivities that, as collections of conceptually delineated and thus stable properties, emerge whenever those defining characteristics come together" (1999:

94). He argues that weak primordialism cannot offer any grand theory of the nation and, unlike extreme primordialism, does not suppose that nations have always existed. Unlike stronger constructivism, it demotes the roles of nationalist elites, nationalist discourses, and modern industrial society to the status of facilitator as opposed to progenitor. In sum, the combination of theoretical self-restraint and open-endedness enables weak primordialism to propose an irenic alternative to primordialism's claim that nations are virtually timeless and to constructivism's claim that they are fleetingly contemporary. Though the use of the word primordialism is tainted, or as Motyl recognizes, 'academically unfashionable,' the idea that nations are curated is a form of 'weak primordialism' as defined by Motyl. It presupposes that social 'lifeways' exist and that elements of these lifeways are integrated into new national propositions. Museums and other such institutions are simply facilitators and their success depends on whether the masses recognize themselves in curated nations and accept themselves as belonging to the nation, and thus of having the nationality proposed by the curators.

In summation, the curated nation is a modern reality, but it is merely one particular form of a number of curated communities that have existed through time. It must be remembered that even in the Roman Empire, all citizens had to participate in common rituals and religious ceremonies uniting all citizens who lived in the Empire. To use the catchphrase of modern studies of nationalism, it too was an imagined community. The modern nation-state does no less. When people abandoned the farm to live in cities, new communities emerged. Through the actions of universal education, industrialization, mass conscription and mass media, nations facilitated the curation of nationhood and the promotion of nationality as central to the identity of individuals.

Curating Nationhood: Estonian Examples

A plot of land in the centre of Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, is fenced off. Foundations are visible, and a sign proclaims the following: "TALLINN WAS BOMBED BY THE SOVIET AIR FORCES DURING THE EVENING AND MIDNIGHT OF MARCH 9, 1944. 53 PER CENT OF LIVING SPACE WAS DESTROYED, CA 20,000 PEOPLE LOST THEIR HOMES, 463 PEOPLE WERE KILLED, AND 359 WERE WOUNDED." This site is very much like a museum. It is a *museumified* site. It could seem at first glance that a sign was simply put up, and the area was fenced off, but this would be misleading. It seems unlikely that a hole would have been left open for 50 years in downtown Tallinn. Only the foundations are visible, so the rest of the building could have been bulldozed. This would have filled the ruins with rubble and soil, concealing them from view. What likely happened is that this site was curated; the site was excavated, the foundations exposed, and the site cleaned. Evidently, a display was organized. The ruins have to be maintained in order to give them meaning. Even though plants are growing, if the site were left on its own for any length of time, the ruins would gradually be hidden from view, and the sign would lose its full meaning. Hence, the site is very much like a museum display. The only reason we cannot call it a museum is that it does not have a visible institutional superstructure:; there are no guides, no curators, and no building enclosing the display.

This display in downtown Tallinn is faithful to the spirit of the museum. According to the Oxford Dictionary, 'museum' is defined as "A building or portion of a building used as a repository for the preservation and exhibition of objects illustrative of antiquities, natural history, fine and industrial art, or some particular branch of any of these subjects, either generally or with reference to a definite region or period. Also implied to the collection of objects itself." The question remains as to whether this site in Tallinn is a museum even though it is not encapsulated in a physical structure. Some authority had to authorize this display; someone had to write the content of the sign; someone had to pay for it to be translated. However, the museum does more than display artifacts—it also educates. A museum speaks of the past and helps to shape meaning. To borrow a definition from Handler and Gable "Museums are carefully managed realms of classification where every thing is kept in its place" (1997: 3).

The museum has its keeper: the curator. In Latin, curator signifies an overseer, a guardian, and an agent. He or she is thus the guardian and overseer. It is implied that the curator does not actively construct meaning, but rather merely oversees what already exists. The fact that museums can, under certain circumstances, become a 'cathedral' to the nation is seemingly predicated by the words themselves. The museum and its curator are entrusted to the task of preserving, but also serve to shape meaning.

When I was studying the ‘display’ in Tallinn, I overheard two teenage boys talking to each other in Russian. They were standing in front of the aforementioned ‘exhibition’ and commenting on the sign. One said to the other, “What about the Germans? Didn’t the German army bomb Tallinn?” The sign’s silence in reference to the German invasion of Estonia is important in the role this sign plays in curating the modern Estonian nation. The display can only be understood in relation to Estonia’s recent history. It is a commentary on the way the nation was integrated into the Soviet Union by force. Also, half of the population of Tallinn was Russian when I was conducting my fieldwork in 1997. This population was described as that of a colonizing force in the Estonian national discourse. The sign in its own way defines the ‘other’ and historicizes the nation; Estonia is placed in history, and the memories of the Soviet invasion are defined as bringing death and destruction to the inhabitants of Tallinn. The sign’s discourse is in opposition to that of the boys, which, as is described later in this chapter, represents the Soviet invasion as liberation as opposed to the colonization of Estonia.

Representing the Estonian Nation

Estonia, as I discovered, is quite a useful point of reference in the study of the history of museums and the role museums play in curating the nation. It is a small country pervaded by a strong national discourse. One museum in Tallinn, the *Estonian History Museum*, provided insight into how the means of organizing displays helps to reify the nation. Inside, there are a number of archaeological artifacts on display, most notably a skeleton preserved *in situ*. The skeleton has been dated back to the medieval period (12th or 13th century) and is identified as the skeleton of a young interred woman. A small painting is included with the remains, showing how she would presumably have looked when alive. She is depicted wearing a traditional folk dress, the type of colourful costumes Estonians now associate with their past and display on postcards, stamps, in folk museums, in tourist shops, folk festivals, and countless other contexts. This folk dress, seen as the authentic dress of the folk, can then be projected into the past. It is then wholly natural for a museum in Estonia to represent a woman, dead over half a millennium ago, in a form of dress that is now thought of as traditional. Chronological continuity is inadvertently created in the display by the juxtaposition of two elements understood only in reference to a larger discourse. However, I do not want to focus on the elements themselves. Given the premise that this is an Estonian ancestor on display, virtually any representation of the skeleton would create chronological continuity. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that the museum is telling a story, creating historical and cultural continuity. The displays in the museum move in time spatially, starting with the archaeological past of 10,000 years ago at the beginning of the museum, to the recent past near the end of the museum. The displays depict different aspects of the past and the life of ancestral Estonians. Each of the displays is part of a larger story, and the artifacts themselves are incidental to the story being told: the story of the nation.

The power of the museum display comes from the technique of representation, which obfuscates the teller of the story; in a way, the story is telling itself. No curator is visible; we see only the supposed 'essence' of the woman on display, with no intermediary. The combined effect of the multiple displays creates a powerful discourse. It is not even necessary for all Estonians to visit the museum, as the museum in itself symbolizes the existence of the Estonian nation defined by its history and culture. The question that I want to examine is whether museums contributed to the national awakening of the Estonian nation in the 19th century.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the Estonian National Museum in Tartu grew out of studies in folklore and folk culture. Founded in 1909, the museum was meant to serve as a treasury of the Estonian cultural heritage. It was founded in the memory of Jakob Hurt who, with the help of students and assistants, collected tens of thousands of folktales, folk songs, and other elements of folk life. In many senses, the collector of folklore makes an ideal curator; "As Dr. Hurt has well said, it provides an exhaustive and graphic chronicle of Estonian life, *written, as it were, by the nation itself*" (Rutter 1925: 198; emphasis added). The collector of the folklore is not the author of the text, even if what is collected is embellished and given a coherent structure by the folklorist. In some cases, the folklore may be an outright fraud—as was the case for the Ossian manuscripts found in Scotland (see Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983: 7)—but for the most part, the folklorists were not inventing folklore, but rather recording, standardizing, and presenting the folklore anew to the urbanized 'folk.' It can be said that the museum has the same pretensions to reality as the folklore collection; the national museum was meant to represent the nation to its people.

Prior to World War II, the presence of the once dominant German-speaking nobility precluded the insertion of the history of Baltic Germans in Estonian national history. This was the case in both Estonia and neighbouring Latvia. Owen Rutter, an Englishman travelling in the Baltics in the early 1920s (shortly after the creation of the independent states of Estonia and Latvia), states that the Letts [Latvians] were not interested in the "ancient glories" of Tallinn and Riga; "They are foreign, not Lettish, and at the present time the national outlook has not had time to readjust itself, and so chauvinist is the modern Lett that he cares not a rap for anything he cannot call Lettish—at least so seemed to me" (1925: 172). The German past could only be nationalized once the German-speaking population had been relocated to Germany by the retreating German armies at the end of World War II. Given that the Germans had dominated political, economic and social life prior to Estonian independence, they were the 'other."' Consequently, the museum collections of Germans in Tallinn and other cities tended to emphasize the historical and artistic achievements of the region (and by extension the Germans in the Baltics). The national museums emphasized the culture of the folk, true representatives of the Estonian nation. At the present time, it is possible to curate the national culture to include the German-Teutonic component of Estonia's past, as this serves to place Estonian national culture in the West and defines the Estonians in opposition to the significant 'other,' the Russians in independent Estonia and the neighbouring Russian Federation.

With the Red Army's invasion and the integration of the Estonian state in the Soviet Union, the efforts of folklorists were curtailed, but not stopped. The exhibitions that immediately became the target of Soviet officials were those that referred to the independent Republic of Estonia. Also, folklorists and curators had to be wary of accusations of 'bourgeois nationalism.' However, work continued, notably in collecting information on the folk calendar and other neutral aspects of folk life. With the independence of Estonia, museums were given the freedom to once again curate nationhood. Ann Tweedie cites Aleksei Peterson, former curator of the Estonian National Museum, who wrote in the 1995 introduction to a new museum journal that "In Estonian national culture, museum culture plays an important role: it is to spread awareness of the value of and to propagate our traditional ways of self-realization, as well as to support and contribute to the renewal of Estonian patriotism" (1998). The new Estonian National Museum continues to focus on folk culture, as this represents the bulk of its collection. The purpose of the museum is to define what it means to be Estonian and to place Estonians within a larger historical context. In essence, it continues to curate the nation.

The Estonian history of museums demonstrates the way in which nationhood is curated. The Russian nation is likewise being curated, but the venue is somewhat different. While Estonian emphasis is on the traditional folk culture, Russian nationhood is being curated using images and stories of the Great Patriotic War, otherwise known as World War II. Though the content may be different, the results are similar. Recent war memorials in Russia equally define national boundaries and define the place of the folk in history. However, it is not pure construction as the success of such monuments rests on the ability of curators to shape the memories of war in a way that will be acceptable to the population. Also, war memorials and museums are helping to define new narratives of the past: rather than seeing Soviet history as a revolutionary rupture from the past, contemporary museums in Russia are presenting the Soviet past as part of a much longer historical timeline, the lives of Soviet soldiers are presented alongside the Tsarist past and Russian medieval history.

Chapter Three

The Great Patriotic War: Two Perspectives of the Past

> «Those who come to us with sword shall perish by the sword»
> Alexander Nevsky[26]

It was a cold and dreary February day when I first visited the Victory Memorial on Moscow's Poklonnaya Hill, but two newlyweds stood under the monument, smiling joyously as their photos were taken. They seemed strangely insignificant posing underneath the severed dragon's head at the base of the statue and stele. I wondered what memories would be fabricated around that 1/60th of a second necessary to record the event in silver emulsion. Would they remember the chill in the air on that damp, overcast day? It is somewhat fitting, though odd from a North American perspective, to have a wedding photo taken in such a location. The Victory Memorial is a shrine to the people, the *narod*. Nonetheless, it can be said that on monumental days in the life of an individual—like a wedding day—memories are made. Likewise, in Russia's Victory Memorial, new memories are also being fabricated as Old and New Russia are reconciled and united. Documents and memories of past events are selectively culled and sanitized in such memorials and museums, presenting a new past that serves the interests of the present.

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[26] This is engraved on a sword donated to the Victory Memorial by the Russian President. Saint Alexander Nevsky was considered a central figure in Russian history; he now occupies a central role in contemporary Russian culture in large part due to a film produced by one of the earliest Soviet directors, Sergei Eisenstein.

Wartime Memorials

This narrative of war and death is linked to older memories of war and sacrifice. Soviet propaganda revived Russian history in order to encourage popular patriotism and to ensure that the population did not lose its morale during the war. The Russian Orthodox Church regained respectability during the war through unconditional support of the Soviet Union's war effort. Likewise, the Soviet state continued to exploit Russian history in order to construct parallels between the past and the present. A 1943 manifesto—published in the same year that the Soviet Union's national anthem was adopted—states, "The German fascists have learned nothing from the defeats which the Russians have in the past repeatedly inflicted upon their haughty predecessors, and with mule-like obstinacy are persisting in their dirty work for which their predecessors were repeatedly thrashed" (pamphlet entitled *Alexander Nevsky* 1943: 14-15).

The Soviet State had begun to reconcile itself with the Russian past even prior to the war. In 1938, one of the most renowned Soviet era filmmakers, Sergei Eisenstein, released the film *Alexander Nevsky*. The film recounts how the Rus' prince Alexander of Novgorod successfully defeated invading German Teutonic knights on the ice of Lake Chudskoe (Lake Peipus in Estonia). In the film, repeated reference is made to the "Russian land." The film depicts the land of Rus' after the Mongol invasion: the people bowed in a weakened state, but still willing to fight for the land. One song in the film proclaims "We shall not yield the Russian land. The invader shall die on our sword" (Leyda 1974: 92).

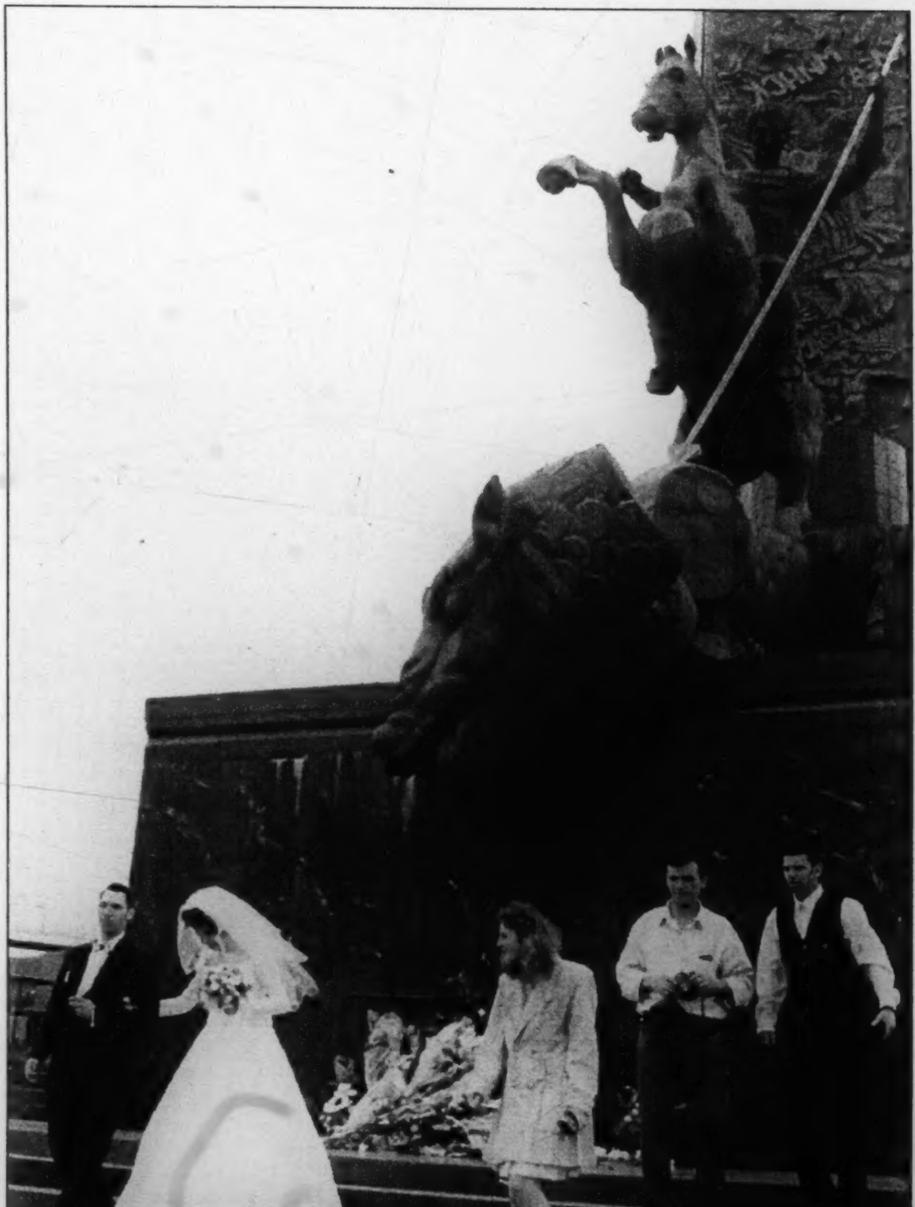

Figure 12: Victory War Memorial Marriage Photos

Modernist theorists such as Rogers Brubaker (1996) and David Laitin (1998) would argue that this is evidence of the Soviet state's construction of Russian nationhood. Yet the importance of Alexander Nevsky (1220-1263) dates back several centuries. Alexander Nevsky was a local folk hero who was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1547. He was celebrated as a hero throughout the centuries; his son founded Moscow's first ruling dynasty, and his name was used by successive generations of rulers to commemorate war heroes. Peter the Great created the Order of Alexander Nevsky in 1725 at the conclusion of the Great Northern War that pitted Russia against Sweden.

To understand the thoughts and actions of Russian President Vladimir Putin and other contemporary Russian politicians, it is important to understand how they understand the past. It is not necessary to see the past as something that it is purely constructed; the Soviets draw upon the imagery and symbols of the Russian religious and imperial past in order to understand their present. Under such circumstances, museums can provide valuable insights because they do not necessarily construct the past, but they do they curate it. This curated past can only be understood in the context of larger social and cultural narratives.

Museums are particularly useful for understanding the role of World War II in modern Russian discourse. The Great Patriotic War is central to Russian identity. It was not the first Great Patriotic War—the Napoleonic War was the first—but it was the defining moment of Soviet history. In the same way that Czarist Russia became a great power after the defeat of Napoleon, the Soviet

Union became a modern superpower by defeating the German army. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the war is one of the few sources of national pride that remains. Russians can point to their literature and the defeat of Hitler as testaments to their people's greatness. These accomplishments were celebrated with monuments. Not only are there a number of statues depicting Russian authors, there is not a town in the former Soviet Union that does not have a statue or monument built to honour the Great Patriotic War. To understand the Great Patriotic War is to gain insight into Russian politics and the larger Russian worldview.

Simon Schama tells us that "A certain idea of landscape, a myth, a vision establishes itself in an actual place, it has a particular way of muddling categories, of making metaphors more real than their referents; of becoming, in fact, part of the scenery" (Schama, 1995: 61). I will argue that the war monuments and museums have become a part of the scenery. They are familiar and reassuring, in the same way that the old beliefs of the Soviet (read Russian) war effort provide meaning. However, in the same way that landscapes are culture before nature, war monuments have to be understood in a larger cultural context.

I begin my analysis with a study of two museums in Moscow: the Victory Memorial Complex, and the Museum of the Central Armed Forces (the former Red Army Museum). I do not claim that museums constructed the predominant discourse on World War II in Russia; instead, I will demonstrate how the dominant discourse is expressed in the artifacts in display on the museum. This dominant discourse was not even created purely by Soviet propaganda; rather parallels were drawn between past and present, and Soviet propagandists simply dipped into a much deeper cultural well, one that dates back several centuries. The predominant discourse is not even limited to Russia: the social narrative is common to Russian-speakers throughout the former Soviet Union and many non-Russians as well. The discourse continues to shape ethnic relations across the former East Bloc states.

Two Moscow Museums and War Memorials

The Victory Memorial is massive. The description of the memorial in the package of postcards I bought proudly enumerates the dimensions of the site: it is 142 metres in height; the Central Museum of the Great Patriotic War is 33,992 square metres in area; the adjoining picture gallery covers an additional 3,550 square metres; and the Victory Park spreads over 135 hectares. The complex, one of the many monumental projects undertaken under the leadership of Moscow's powerful mayor, Yury Luzhkov, cost millions of dollars to construct and was completed in 1995. Moscow's administration and the memorial's designer, Zurab Tsereteli, clearly favoured the grandiose. He designed the Victory Monument and a colossal 60-meter tall statue of Peter the Great built on the banks of the Moscow River, a stone's throw from Gorky Park. Even though the state is virtually bankrupt—it has a difficult time finding the necessary funds to pay the meager pensions of its citizens and, notably, war veterans—the city seemingly can find

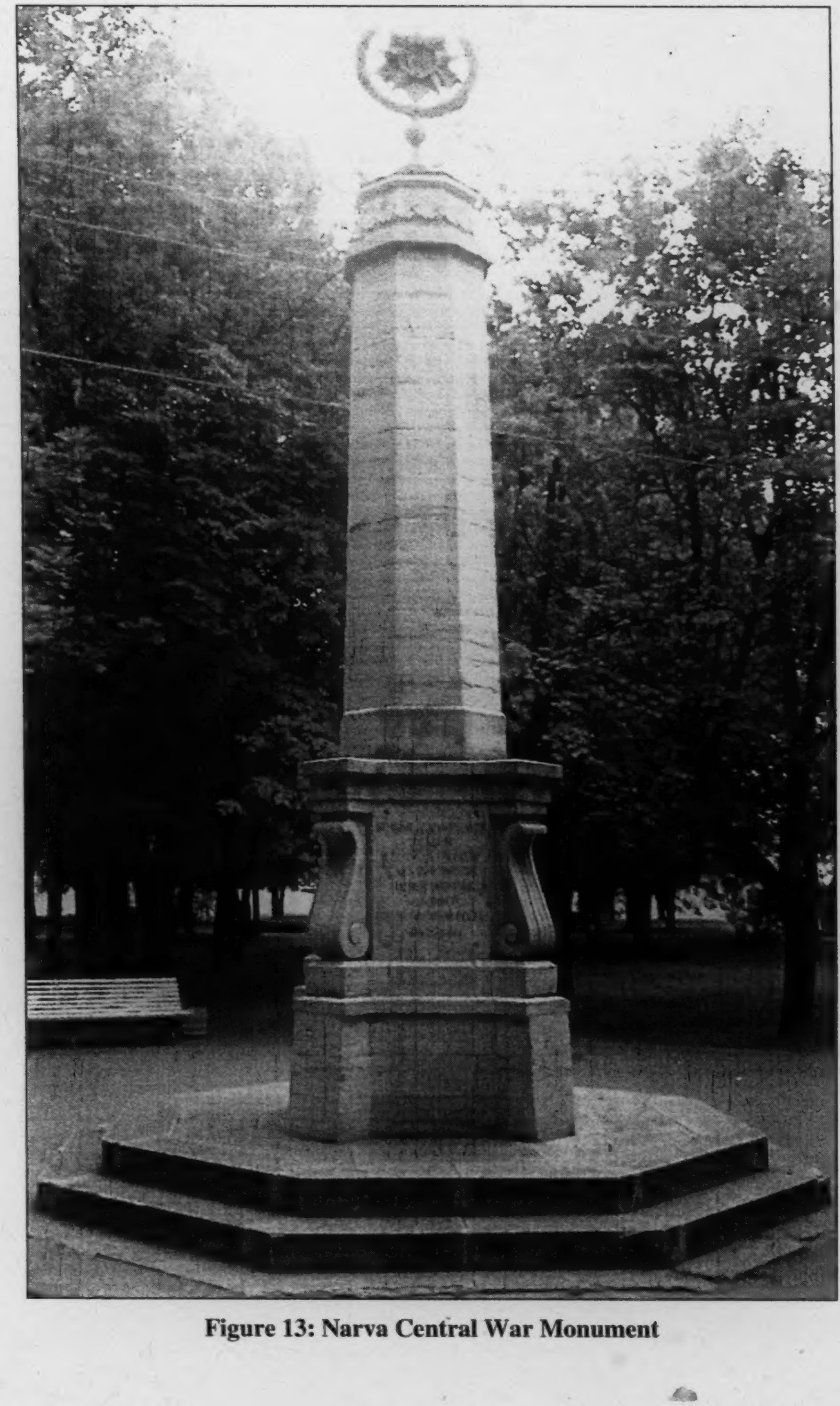

Figure 13: Narva Central War Monument

dollars to finance new marble monuments in a city replete with such civic temples, as Moscow presents itself as a world city that could rival any large Western metropolis.

The one thing that is evident at the victory memorial is that it was not a Communist-inspired museum, even if the story that is told has remained largely unchanged since Soviet times. Perhaps what is most notable in the new memorials is the way in which symbols of Czarist Russia are recycled in order to interpret events of Soviet Russia. The fascist dragon lies under the hooves of Saint George's rearing horse; spear in hand, Saint George, the patron saint of Moscow, is triumphant; high overhead, angels trumpet the victory and stand ready to crown the victor with golden laurels; swastikas are engraved in the sides of the dragon, and on the stele there are valiant caped soldiers battling the enemy on the front. The names of various cities—both in and outside of the Russian Federation—are also engraved on the stele, in memory of cities on the front where many Soviet soldiers (hence many Russians) died.

Inside the Central Museum—a long, slender, slightly curved marble building, elevated on columns with a domed annex at the rear—is an example of the ways in which a discontinuous past and present are visually linked to create a harmonious history. A series of busts are displayed underneath two flags. The busts commemorate various generals of Imperial Russia who were (for the most part) born in the late 18th century. Overhead, the flag to the left is a Soviet flag with the inscription "For Our Soviet Motherland," and to the right is the modern flag of the Russian Federation. The Soviet Union may have been founded by revolutionaries who tried to raze all that Imperial Russia valued—notably the Church and the Czar—but the iconography of the memorial turns a blind eye to the ruptures of the past and reconciles imperial, Communist, and present-day Russia. A case in point is the monument dedicated to the Defenders of the Russian Land. A medieval Muscovite with sword and spear in hand stands next to a soldier of imperial Russia with tunic and bayoneted musket. The triad is completed by a modern soldier from World War II bearing a machine gun. Adding to their heroic stature is the fact that all three are caped and face the same direction, scanning the horizon. However, their posture is not aggressive; though resolute, they hold their weapons almost nonchalantly, as if waiting for the enemy to attack.

The site of the memorial is significant because it is the location where, according to popular history, Napoleon waited with his army for the keys of Moscow, and Muscovites retaliated by setting fire to their city, beginning Napoleon's rout from Russia and the rest of Europe. A Russian 'arc de triomphe' was built in Moscow to commemorate Napoleon's failed invasion of Russia. Napoleon's shadow still looms as a central event in Russian history. This was true even in Soviet times; Soviet authorities restored the arch in the late 1960s. The arch is now visible from the War Memorial. At that time, city officials had set aside a sizable tract of land on the Memorial Hill to build an eventual monument. City officials resurrected the project in the late 1980s. As the memorial demonstrates, the myths created in one generation can become the popular history of succeeding generations. Present-day political and social leaders, in monuments and museums, can in turn consecrate this popular history and legitimate the authenticity of the mythical past.

The designers and sculptors of these monuments are by no means the first to reconcile the Soviet and Imperial Russian past. During World War II, Stalin and the Communist Party cultivated Great Russian nationalism and called upon the Orthodox Church to help the state foster a patriotic love for the homeland. Symbols of the past were also used to support the war effort. In the Russian Central Armed Forces Museum, for example, a poster calls upon Muscovites to rise to the defence of their city and their homeland; in the poster, one sees both modern Soviet and medieval Muscovite soldiers together on the same battlefield, rushing forward to fight an aggressor.[27] Inscribed above the soldiers is a quote attributed to Dimitri Pozhersky stating "Our right, to beat you to death." Below, Stalin calls upon the Soviet citizenry to "be inspired in this war by the manly image of our great ancestors." Much was done to cultivate the 'manly image' of the ancestors; the Soviet state published many books featuring the exploits of historical Russians, including Alexander Nevsky, canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church for his role in defending the Russian land—a term in use by the

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[27] The Orthodox Church made this link to the past quite quickly. When the German army invaded, the Orthodox Church immediately sought to mobilize the population. The Soviet population had to wait ten days before hearing from Stalin. The Church raised funds and financed two tank divisions, the Dimitrii Donskoi and the Aleksandr Nevsky.

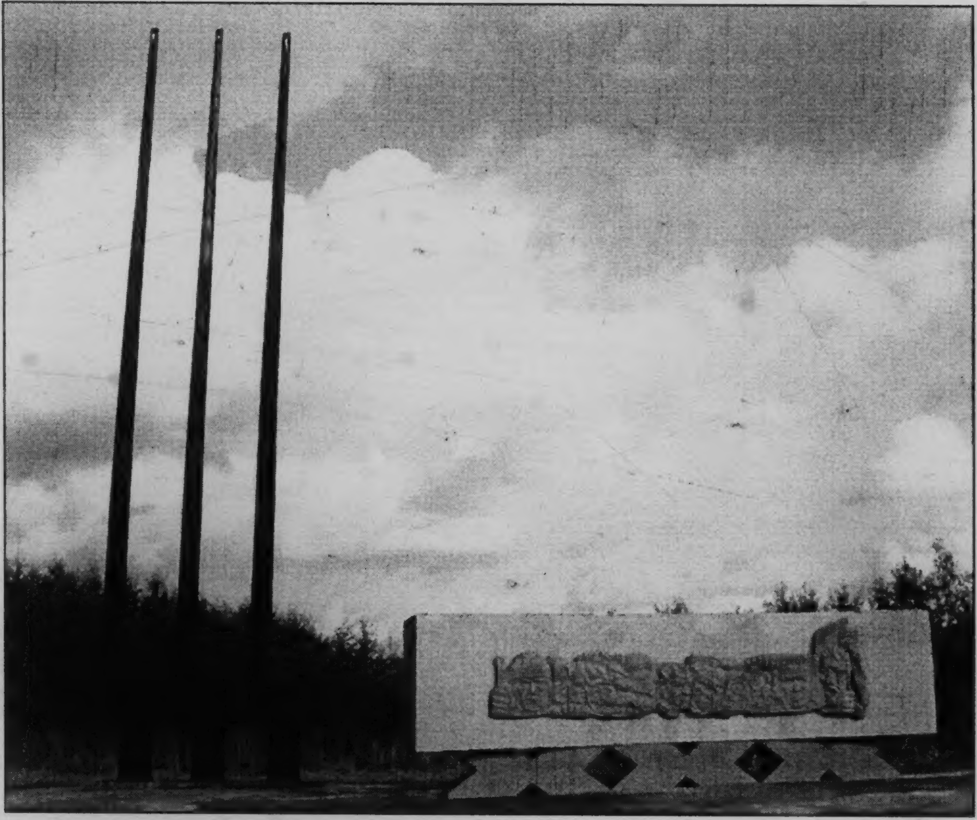

Figure 14: Narva War Memorial

12th century—against invading Teutonic Knights intent on imposing Catholicism in the lands of Orthodox Rus'.

The contents of the Central Armed Forces Museum have remained largely unchanged, but some new material has been added to better integrate the Imperial Russian past. Whereas the first and second halls of the museum were formerly dedicated to the formation of the Red Army, now a visitor can gaze upon various weapons and uniforms of the Imperial Russian Army. In addition, there is a display dedicated to the photos and possessions of the Czar and his family. The transition from the Imperial Army to the Red Army, in the museum at least, is increasingly evolutionary in nature rather than revolutionary. There is seemingly no rupture in the past, only continuity.

The Central Museum of the Great Patriotic War does not need to reconcile the Imperial and Soviet past, but it achieves this nonetheless by simply ignoring the existence of the Communist Party altogether. In the museum, for example, there are displays dedicated to the Russian Orthodox Church and its war effort, but the word Communism is not even whispered in the museum. The fact that the Soviet Union was at the time under the leadership of the Communist Party is never mentioned—not even as an allusion—in the displays. A case in point is one of the exhibitions dealing with the war effort in Eastern Russia. A young man is depicted in a winter setting during the war. The caption below the man says that he is a party leader, but seemingly prefers not to mention which party he leads. The only indications of the political orientation of the country at the time are contained in the artifacts themselves; only the occasional letterhead or newspaper article hint at the country's recent political past. The people themselves seemingly organized the war effort, under Stalin's leadership, in order to defeat the German Army.

This striking absence of the Party in the Victory Memorial can be contrasted to the Central Armed Forces Museum. Founded at an earlier date, the museum does pay its dues to the Communist Party and the role the party played during World War II. The Museum states in one of the captions that the Soviet people and its armed forces rallied around the Party and showed great heroism in the defeat of the German fascists. High above one hall dedicated to the fall of Berlin is engraved a passage by Lenin stating that the people—workers and peasants united—would never be defeated when they waged war for their Soviet power. In the same hall, there is a large mural, made of an enlarged photo, of German soldiers throwing down their standards in Moscow's Red Square at the conclusion of the war. On the opposite side of the hall, the Marshals Zhukov and Rokossovsky are depicted mounted on their horses trampling those very same standards. This painting is a relatively recent addition—1985–and demonstrates the growing stature of these two war heroes. In the Victory Memorial, there are two displays dedicated to their lives and careers.

True, the Central Armed Forces Museum is not preoccupied with a purely Marxist-Leninist interpretation of the War, but the Party is not totally ignored. We find a few copies of the Party Program on display in the museum. The underlying

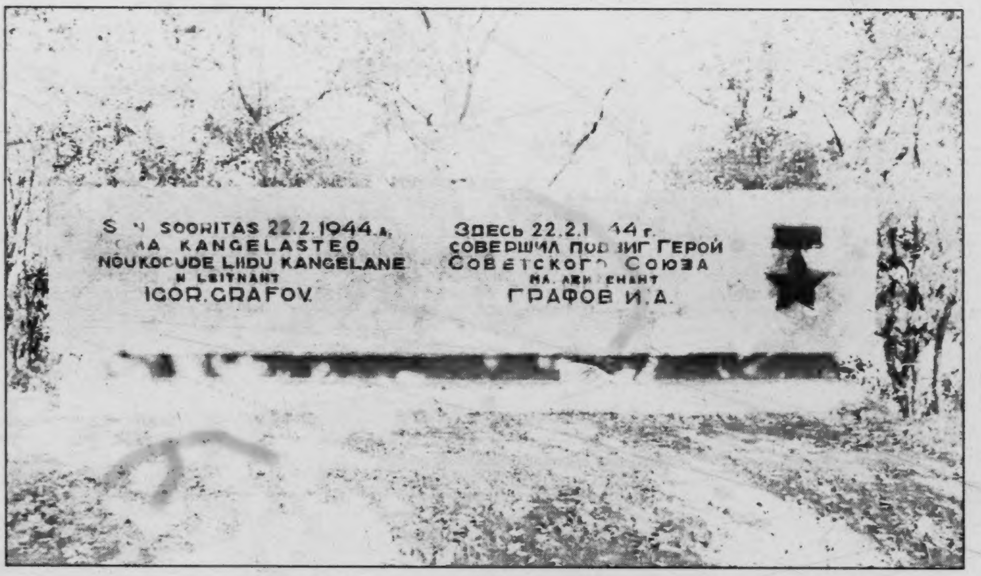
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Figure 15: Hero of War Memorial

(Dedicated to Narva's Soviet Great Patriotic War Hero Igor A. Grafov)

theme of the Victory Memorial is that of the innocent Soviet People suffering at the hands of the Fascist aggressors. Though it is true that the Soviet Union suffered staggering causalities in the course of the war, it is equally true that all that might depict the Red Army as aggressors rather than defenders is conspicuously absent from the displays. For example, the non-aggression pact “On Friendship and The Border” concluded between Germany and the Soviet Union is on display, but the secret protocol in which Eastern Europe is divided into German and Soviet ‘spheres of interest’ is, if not ignored, then subtly camouflaged. In the pact negotiated by the German and Soviet negotiators Ribbentrop and Molotov, Poland, the Baltic States and other Eastern European states were divided into German and Soviet spheres of interest. After concluding this pact with its secret protocol, the Soviet Union denounced a treaty of non-aggression and attacked Finland. The war lasted four months. Unfortunately for Soviet strategists, the Finns did not respect the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop secret protocol. The Soviet Army was shown to be lacking in training and was quite ineffective and unable to defeat the Finnish Armies. German generals certainly took note of the weaknesses of the Soviet Army. When the German armies advanced into the Soviet Union, the country was simply not prepared for war, in part owing to Soviet leadership. Not only had the ranks of the Red Army been decimated by the purges, according to Richard Overy the Soviet front line was in a “state of utter chaos” (1998: 76). Overy summarizes the disarray at the front quite succinctly as follows: “Without air cover, adequate weapons or intelligence, they [Soviet Red Army units] were annihilated, often in just a few hours" (1998: 76-77).

The details and ramifications of Soviet policies are not evident in the Victory Memorial. In one display we can see a map—in English—of the frontiers fixed by the Soviet-German Pact of September 29, 1939. There is a Russian caption underneath stating that this was how Poland was to be shared by Germany and the Soviet Union according to the conditions of the "Treaty of Friendship and Borders". Whereas the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-aggression Treaty is prominently displayed with a photo of Stalin shaking hands with Ribbentrop after the conclusion of the treaty, the secret protocol negotiated at the same time is not displayed, and this secret treaty is only noted in the following display. In many ways these displays, as we shall see, are quite disconnected, and a prior knowledge of history is necessary to piece together what the information really means.

A case in point is the Red Army's massacre of Poles in the Katyn forest. The display does admit that on September 17, 1939, the Red Army, in accordance with the secret protocol, invaded Polish territory. More than 250,000 Polish prisoners of war were taken. Out of these, close to 15,000 officers, workers, politicians, and others were shot in 1940 in the Katyn forest not far from Smolensk. A letter sent to Stalin from Beria is on display, but it is not meant to be read. It took an extraordinary effort on my part to actually read the letter in the display. Beria discloses that 14,700 people had been executed. The photo that

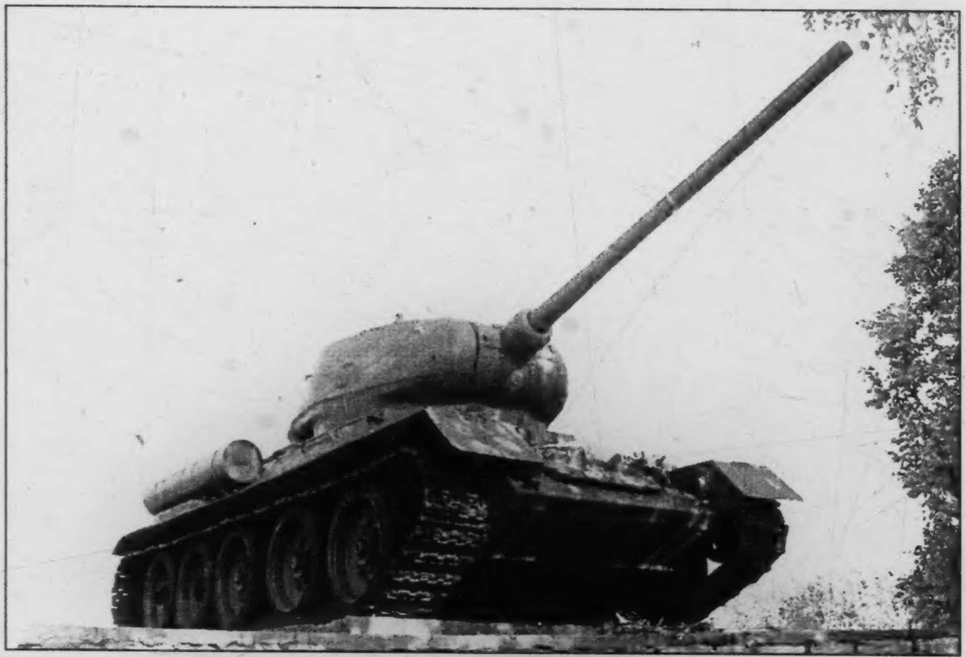

Figure 16: Narva's Tank Memorial

accompanies this information is discordant: four young smiling Polish officers, who likely were killed by the Red Army in the Katyn forest.

In this same display, we can read a telegram from Ramsay sent to the commanders of the Red Army from Tokyo informing them that Germany would soon invade the Soviet Union. This note informs the Soviet leadership that Berlin had informed its ally that the invasion of the Soviet Union would begin in the second half of June (1941). The display does not mention who exactly Ramsay was, nor does it examine the significance of this telegram. In truth, the memorial does not critically examine the events of the Second World War. Instead, visitors can examine endless displays of uniforms and equipment. The images displayed are striking—hundreds of photos and six computer-generated dioramas depicting the major battles of the war—but there is little context. At most, there is a short history of principal events. The museum is not meant to question the politics of the Soviet Union during the course of the war. It serves to glorify the people and the war effort.

The Victory Memorial is telling a story whose analysis requires not only the observation of what is on display, but how it is displayed and what is placed in the forefront. A telling example is the position of the religious monuments on the site of the Victory Memorial. The Russian Orthodox temple is located in a highly visible location in the central square, while the Jewish synagogue is tucked away in a grove of trees far behind the central square, and the Muslim mosque is located on the far edge of the memorial complex. The inclusion of these buildings does demonstrate the recognition that people other than Russians suffered in the war, but the overall impression is that it was nonetheless a Russian war, as it is the Russian Orthodox Church that is clearly visible to all who visit the site.

The role played by the other regions of the Soviet Union, though recognized, is also pushed to the background. In the dioramas depicting the major battles of the Great Patriotic War, the ones that are represented are all on Russian soil, with the exception of the fall of Berlin. Likewise, the fact that the Soviet Red Army was comprised of soldiers from throughout the Soviet Union is not highlighted, and the terrible losses inflicted on other regions of the Soviet Union—notably Ukraine and Belarus—is not examined in any detail. The same is true of the Jewish Genocide. There are references to the camps and those that died, but no separate display is dedicated to the Holocaust. The overall message of the museum is that it was a Russian war with Russian heroes and victims. The memorial complex then fits this war into a much longer Russian timeline, one that appropriates the history of Kievan Rus'. Underneath the statue of the Defenders of the Russian Land is the simple inscription "*Rus'*".

Two Soviet commanders of the Red Army are glorified in the museum: the generals Gregori Zhukhov and Konstantin Rokossovsky. Zhukhov is depicted as a brilliant strategist, hard working, highly disciplined, masculine and self-reliant. In the display commemorating the century since his birth, there is only one passage that is even slightly negative, and that dates to the period following the war. His uneasy relationship with Stalin is not described in the exposition; the fact that he spent the year following the war in virtual seclusion fearing that the secret police would arrest him is not mentioned. Rokossovsky was purged and exiled prior to World War II. In fact, over 70 % of the Red Army's officers were purged in this period. The Central Armed Forces Museum has 80 photos on display of high-ranking officers killed in Stalin's purges in the late 1930s. This is not examined in the memorial, however, and the question that begs to be answered is how exactly Zhukhov survived this period. The purges are not incidental to the war, since present-day Russian historians openly admit they likely encouraged Hitler to invade the Soviet Union; close to a decade is required to train a fully competent officer. A closer examination of the history of the war, its causes, and also its consequences might detract from the Memorial's underlying theme. Rokossovsky's exile is mentioned, but not elaborated in the display outlining his life. Neither is it mentioned that Zhukhov participated in the cabal to have Beria arrested and quickly executed following Stalin's death. Nor is Zhukhov's participation in the decision to invade Hungary in 1956 noted in the museum. It is evident from the sheer volume of texts dedicated to their memory that Zhukhov and Rokossovsky attained hero status in Soviet times; these texts are comprised of biographies and autobiographies alike, a number of which were on display in the museum. However, the museum does not provide a detailed account of the lives of these two 'heroes,' but simply adds to their heroic stature.

The underlying message of the Central Armed Forces Museum is quite similar to that of the museum located in the Victory Memorial. It does, in its collection, possess a copy of the secret protocol. The conscientious visitor will find a copy of the document in a large scrapbook in one of the halls entitled "The External Politics of the USSR in 1939-40." In a spirit of *glasnost*, the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* published the secret protocol in 1989, but this event did not necessarily lead to a reevaluation of the other material on display. On the same table, next to the scrapbook on the politics of the Soviet Union, there is another scrapbook with photos and information on the Finno-Soviet War. There is one paragraph explaining that the war's objective was to gain additional territory surrounding Leningrad (St. Petersburg). In many respects, it is the same dogmatic interpretation of the war that existed in the Soviet Union. The museum does not present the Soviet Union as an aggressive nation; in the museum, there are no displays of the Soviet invasion of Hungary or Czechoslovakia. There is one display dealing with the return of Russian soldiers from Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall. We have a few photos of smiling soldiers returning to the Motherland, two small chunks of the Berlin Wall, a few plaques, and a few odd trinkets that summarize the Red Army's presence in Eastern Europe for close to half a century.

The museum of the Central Armed Forces does not seek to challenge or to openly criticize the activities—past or present—of the state or the armed forces. This is achieved for the most part by focusing on war heroes. In addition to the various paraphernalia on display—uniforms, guns, tanks, full-sized replica of a missile—hall after hall in the museum is filled with photos and biographies of

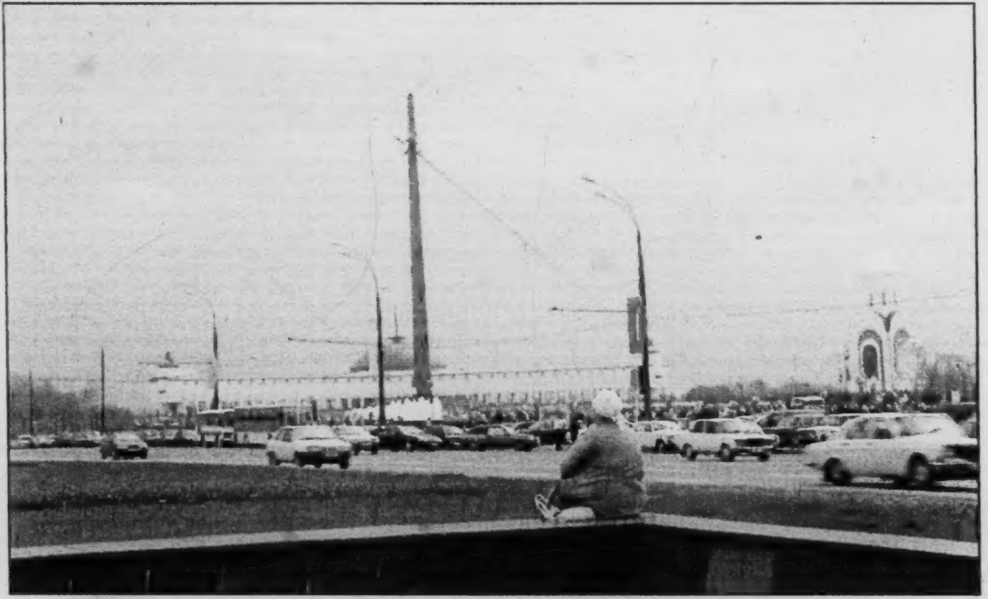

Figure 17: Moscow Victory Memorial Park Complex

various war heroes. This emphasis on war heroes and the display of their personal objects permits the museum to distance itself from analysis or interpretation; a photo, a wristwatch and a few odd trinkets in themselves do not constitute a direct challenge of the activities of the state. However, globally the photos and biographies do present a subtle narrative which in many ways parallels what is found in the Victory Memorial: the Great Patriotic War involved brave individuals fighting valiantly to protect their homeland from a foreign aggressor.

However, this is certainly not the case when dealing with the Afghan War. The exposition contains, among other documents, a treaty dating to 1921 concluded between the Russian Socialist Federation—the Soviet Union had not yet been created—and Afghanistan. There is another treaty on display signed by Brezhnev and the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan prior to the war. The display boasts the mandatory photos and personal objects of a few war heroes, but there is little mention of the destruction inflicted by the Soviet Army. There is, however, a listing of the number of war casualties broken down according to nationality: of the 13,833 dead, 6,879 were Russians. Finally, there is a copy of a letter authored by the commander of the 40th Army explaining that the soldiers were in Afghanistan to fulfill the requirement of socialist internationalism and to protect the sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan.

This does not mean that there were no subtle changes to the museum and the artifacts displayed since the 1980s and the advent of *glasnost*. In recent years, a new exposition was added displaying uniforms, guns, and various other artifacts dating back to Imperial Russia. Likewise, the history of the Revolution has changed in recent years. A new painting depicting the leading Bolsheviks was added to the museum in 1987. It is striking in that virtually all the individuals depicted in the wall-sized painting were killed in subsequent purges under the leadership of Stalin. However, in this painting, Trotsky is still presented as a subversive; while a young Stalin stands behind Lenin in the centre of the painting looking forward, Trotsky is to the side, looking furtively away. Hence, in the Gorbachev era, Trotsky re-emerged in Soviet history, but only as a marginal figure, still suspect in the eyes of the state. The most recent painting was added in 1995 to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the Russian Navy. Peter the Great stands on the docks in a regal pose. Nobles and church officials are to the left, while some sailors are to the right. The ships of the new Russian Navy span out onto the horizon. New material is added to the museum by accretion, which is slowly contributing to a new discourse. This new discourse is not radically different from the old discourse. While having abandoned Marxism-Leninism completely, the fundamental themes and premises have stayed basically untouched.

In any museum, what is not displayed is as meaningful as what is contained in the exhibitions. In the Great Patriotic War Memorial, the fate of 5,000,000 soldiers and officers who were German prisoners of war is not on display. This is especially striking, as many displays are concerned with the

German genocide of innocent civilians in the camps. The Soviet prisoners of war participated in the war effort and suffered during the war—though perhaps not as much as the Soviet accounts of the war would have had the population believe—but the survivors returned to live in infamy after the conclusion of the war. They were for the most part exiled to Siberia and other locations in the Soviet Union. Having survived the German camps, many died in the Soviet camps. Such information would detract from the museum's subtext that the war was a national tragedy ending in a great victory.

At the height of *glasnost*, Gorbachev encouraged Soviet historians to fill in the 'blank spots' of history. This prompted historians and non-historians alike to critically examine Soviet history. Now that the euphoria has subsided and the Soviet Union no longer exists, Russian museums are not necessarily dedicated to presenting a new interpretation of history. If the War Memorial can serve as an example of a post-Soviet Museum, it is clear that the old discourse elaborated during Stalinist times has not been entirely abandoned, but easily recycled. The old war heroes are still being glorified, and past humiliations remembered.

Nationhood and the Great Patriotic War

The central theme in the museums I visited in Moscow is that the Red Army did not fight the war, but rather it was the people, *narod*, that defeated the Fascists. The outcome of the war was not determined by the military strength of one army or the other, but rather by valour of those fighting the war. As Grigoriy

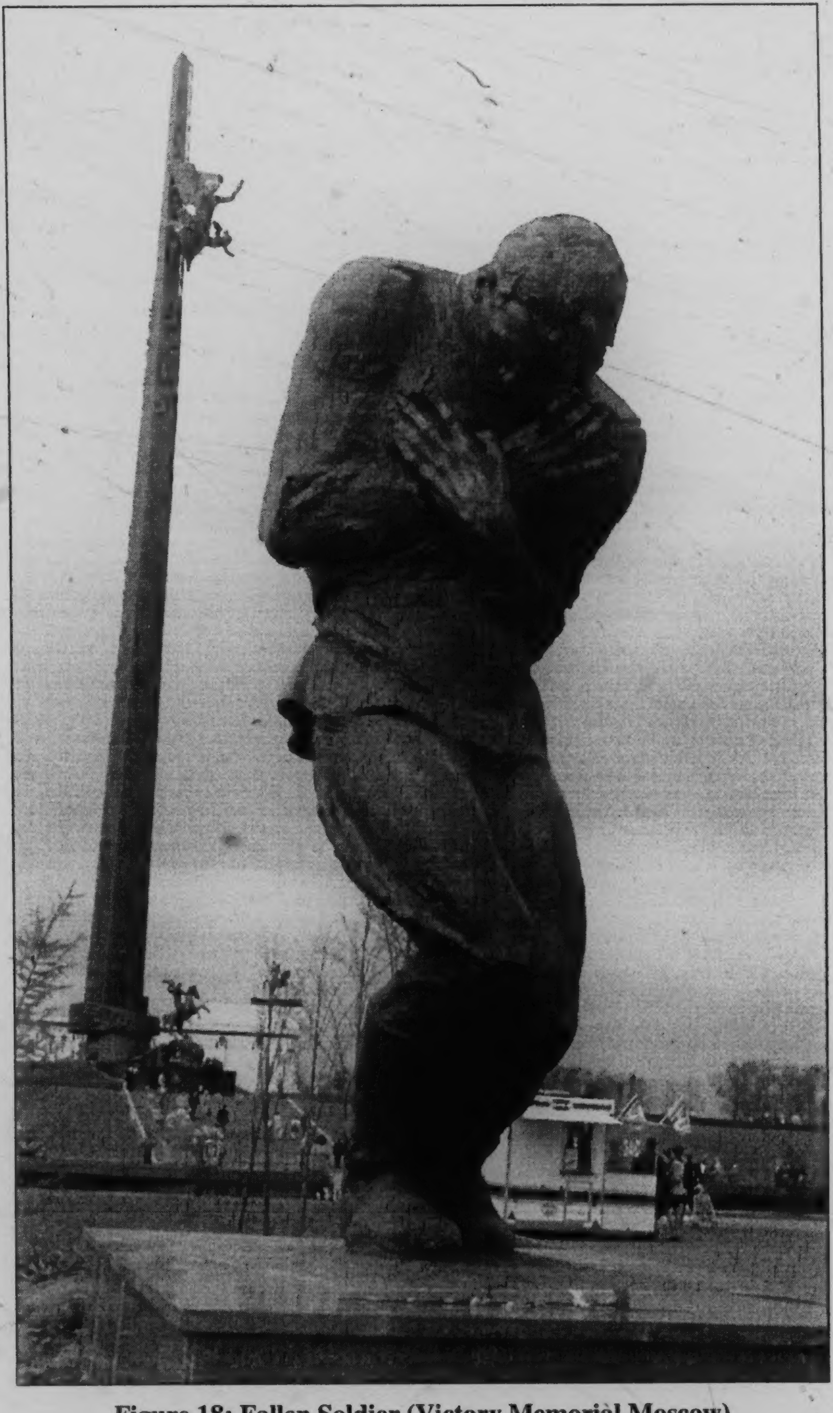

Figure 18: Fallen Soldier (Victory Memorial Moscow)

Chukhray[28] states, "The history of the Great Patriotic War demonstrates that even if circumstances were very difficult and hopeless, the people [*narod*] not having lost their honor, were capable of accomplishing marvels. If the people did not have honor, all would have gone awry." If the Soviet Union won the war, it had nothing to do with military supremacy; rather it was an indication of the valor of the *narod*; according to Chukhray, "The crucial element to victory is the spirit (*dukh*) of the army". The generals, such as Gregori Zhukov and Konstantin Rokossovsky, gained the respect of their soldiers not necessarily because of their abilities as generals, but because they had ensured victory.

Zhukov has become a modern Russian icon embodying the *narod* and their victory over the Fascists. A new display has been added to the former Red Army museum devoted to Zhukov memorabilia. There is no text, simply uniforms and other personal items that belonged to the Marshal. Zhukov's rise is by no means incidental; he has replaced Stalin. It is now Zhukov who was the great commander who led the Russians to victory. He is the only Russian in the Stalin-Rokossovsky-Zhukov triad. Stalin was a native son of Georgia, while Rokossovsky was of Polish origin. Zhukov is simply a better embodiment of the

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[28] The Russian-language newspaper, *Estonia*, chose to reprint an article that had been published in the Russian newspaper *Literaturnaya gazeta*, in which a veteran, Grigoriy Chukhray, is highly critical of revisionism concerning the war. The article, quite succinct, states that history is not to be equated with politics, since it "is eternal like the people who create it." The veteran believes that it is important to remember all history, the good and the bad. The reason: "The bad, in order not to wallow in the authentic garbage and filth of the past. The good, in order to lean on the past in order to confidently build the future." This article is not only useful for understanding the perspective of veterans in the Russian Federation; the fact that it was republished in Estonia's Russian-language press to commemorate Victory Day demonstrates that it is concordant with the Russian social narrative in Estonia. Also this article is not discordant with thoughts expressed by veterans I met in Narva, and articles written by Russians in Estonia.

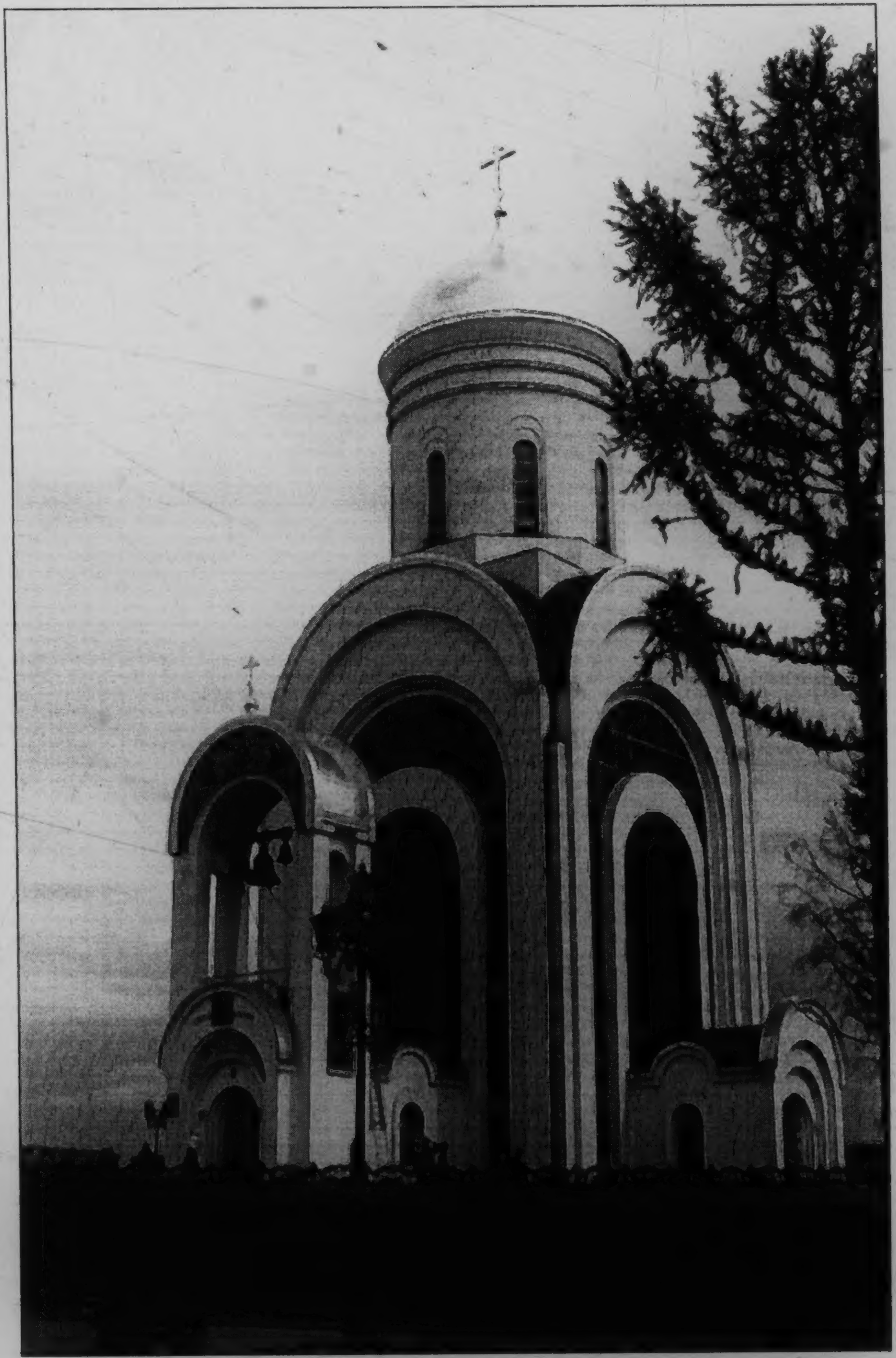

Figure 19: Orthodox Memorial Church (Victory Memorial Moscow)

narod and their war effort. It is a process that began with Nikita Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. According to Khrushchev, the Soviet victory had been ensured not by Stalin, but rather by the "magnificent and heroic deeds of hundreds of millions of people" (Overy, 1998: 323). Nonetheless, Khrushchev maintained that the Party and the Government had likewise assured victory in the Great Patriotic War (Overy, 1998: 323). Now, with both Stalin and the Party having been discredited, Marshal Zhukov is all that remains that has yet to be fully discredited.

The reasons for waging war were quite simple according to Chukhray. He states that propaganda was not necessary, since it was clear who the Fascists were and that their intention was to enslave the Soviet population. Later, he states that the people were in the war not to defend Stalin, but that which was dear to them: Russia itself. Chukhray was particularly incensed that the Russian President, in a trip to Germany, had cheapened the meaning of the Victory. As he relates, "I was in Germany before our soldiers left in August of last year. There, the President said in his speech that in the war there had been no victors and no defeated. The Germans were satisfied. But my heart shrank with shame for the millions who gave their lives for that victory" (Chukhray 1995: 4).

There is no doubt that Russians and others are rewriting the history of the former Soviet Union. The inhabitants of the newly independent republics of the Soviet Union often portray Russians as invaders and colonizers. As a general rule, the Russians in Narva do not remember the war in the way that Estonians do, and

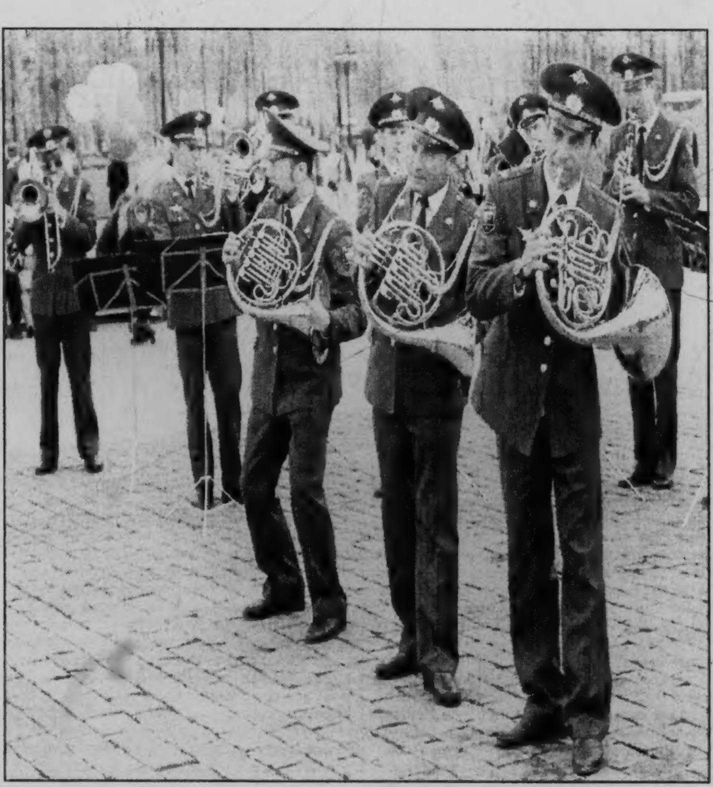

Figure 20: Army Band, Victory Day (Victory Memorial Moscow)

consequently they do not see themselves as occupiers. During Soviet times, the Germans soldiers were portrayed as rapists and thieves, whereas the Soviet soldiers were depicted as honourable. The crimes that Soviet soldiers and NKVD (the People's Committee of Internal Affairs, later the KGB) committed in the territories they were liberating/occupying were not revealed to the Soviet population until the arrival of *glasnost*. It is evident that the Victory Memorial and the Museum of the Central Armed Forces do not examine such issues. The Victory Memorial was designed and planned with much input from war veterans, who had little interest in deconstructing the myths of the Great Patriotic War.

Russians for the most part believe the Great Patriotic War was a worthy cause and that the people defeated the German Fascists because their *narod* had valour and fought the Fascists without respite. They paid for that victory with the lives of millions of soldiers and civilians. The Russian veterans are also validated in that the entire *civilized* world was at war against Hitler.

Narva and the Great Patriotic War

The Russian population readily accepted Stalin's myth of the Great Patriotic War since it mirrored their experiences. Citizens did not have access to information that could have helped them judge the effectiveness of the war effort, but their suffering was real. It must be remembered that the Battle of Stalingrad, for example, was the most vicious military campaign of the Great Patriotic War. More than 1,000,000 people lost their lives in the German campaign to take this

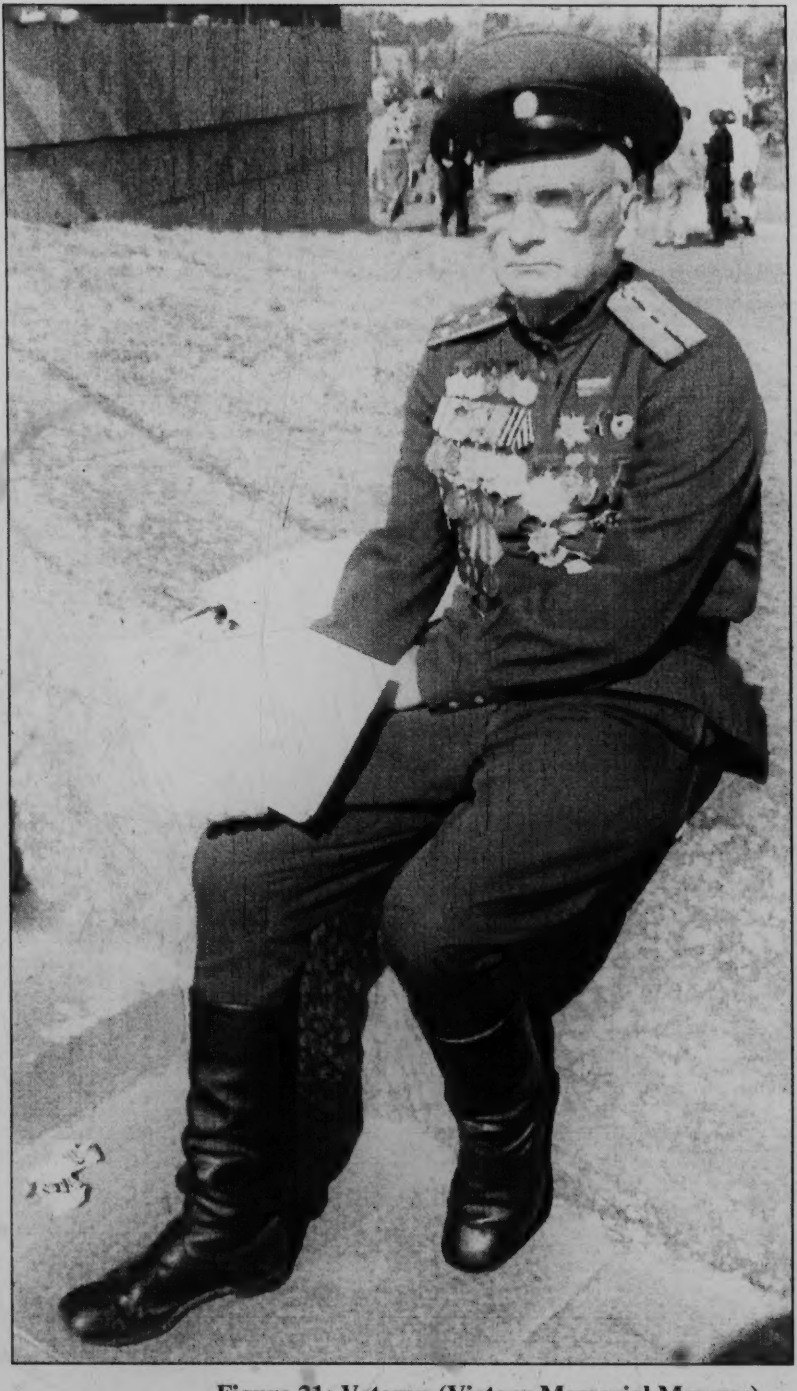

Figure 21: Veteran (Victory Memorial Moscow)

Soviet City. Before the war, more than 500,000 civilians inhabited the city, and once the Germans had retreated, less than 2,000 souls remained.

It was also quite easy for the population to feel as if all were at war against Fascism. One historian in Narva noted that he was surprised to find in German newspapers—published just prior to the war's end—articles about fashion and other topics unrelated to the war effort. He remarked that in Soviet newspapers, the war was all-encompassing, and every article reported on the war effort. There was no escape from the war in the Soviet Union, and it shaped the mindset of a generation. Even today, I was told that a Westerner could never truly understand the Great Patriotic War. Perhaps, but the Victory Memorial did provide a useful point of entry into an analysis of the meaning behind the war.

Many Russian veterans I met in Narva were frustrated by the fact that their sacrifices were no longer commemorated and that many of the old holidays celebrating the defeat of the Fascists were no longer celebrated in Estonia. One veteran commented on his frustration that the city no longer does anything for the veterans on Victory Day (May 9). That day is no longer a national holiday in Estonia. The country does celebrate a Victory Day on June 23, but this Victory Day commemorates the anniversary of the Battle of Võnnu; in June and July of 1919, the Baltic-German Landeswehr Army was defeated in northern Latvia. The final front remained in the East, but on February 2, 1920, the Tartu Peace Treaty was concluded, wherein newly Bolshevized Soviet Russia recognized the

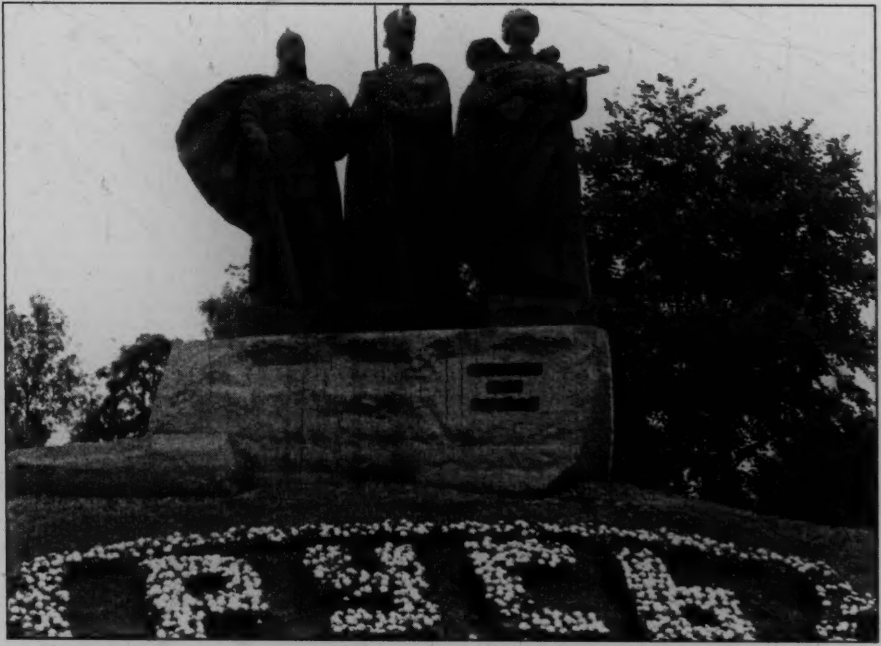

Figure 22: Defenders of the Russian Land (Victory Memorial Moscow)

Photo courtesy Jeff Martinson

Republic of Estonia. There is no doubt that the history of Estonia is being rewritten. The Russians are now portrayed as invaders and colonizers. Many Estonians can relate to the new narratives in the same way that Russians find meaning in the cult of the Great Patriotic War.

In Tallinn, the central war memorial—dubbed the Bronze Man given that it features a bronze statue of a Soviet soldier with head lowered in mourning commemorating the soldier who died 'liberating' the city—has been the subject of heated debate. Estonians demanded the removal of this monument, but city officials wavered, fearing the protests of the large local Russian community. Though it did not remove the statue, the city nonetheless went to great lengths to hide this monument from view. The eternal fire was extinguished and removed, and the road system was rerouted in order to lead people past the monument to a new focal point: the National Library. A row of trees was then planted to hide the monument from view (Kodres and Kalm 1998). As Krista Kodres and Mart Kalm (1998) affirm, the act of erecting, restoring and destroying monuments is inherently political and in Estonia the removal of Soviet era monuments and the rebuilding of monuments destroyed during the Soviet occupation is done to "symbolize the victory over Soviet power" (see Kodres and Kalm 1998). In Narva, the pressure to remove the war memorials was muted given the small number of Estonians living in the city and, unlike Tallinn, it is not the capital or an international centre with large numbers of visitors, but those Estonians who live in Narva do harbour different memories of the war.

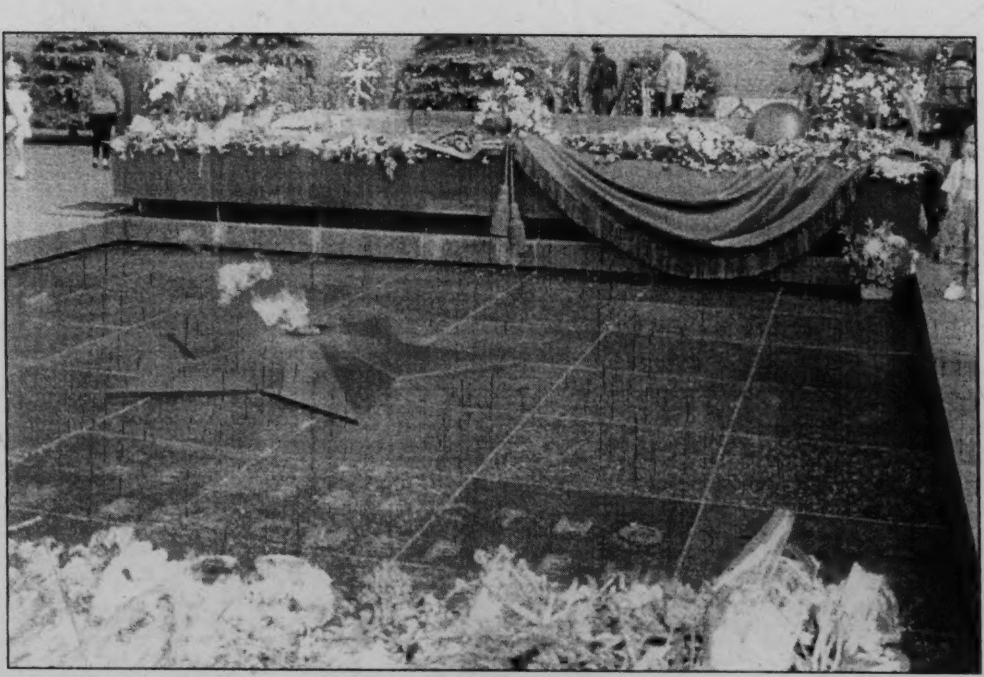

Figure 23: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Moscow

An older Estonian woman interviewed in Narva, who lived through the occupations of both the Germans and the Soviets, did not have many fond memories of the Red Army's liberation. She described the 1944 Soviet liberation in very graphic terms. She remembers that in 1944 she was 14 years old and lived in the Estonian countryside to the south. As the Red Army advanced, she went with her mother and other relatives to the *hutor* (Estonian farmstead). The house had burnt down during the war and all that remained was the sauna. Her father had been a soldier in the German army, and at that time they did not know whether he had survived the war. She had a gold chain and cross on her neck, a gift from her father. When the Red Army arrived, they found their hiding spot. One soldier demanded that she give him her chain and cross. When she refused, he tore the chain from her neck. Her uncle had to give up his ring and watch. They then waited for the worst. One officer came to the sauna, they believed, in order to take her mother. Fearing that her mother would be raped, she screamed in German to the officer, "We waited for you [the Red Army] for so long, and now this is what you will do!" She believes that the soldier was well educated, because hearing that, he turned away and left them alone for the night.

This woman I interviewed considered the German soldiers that invaded Estonia to be more civilized; they never once laid a finger on any woman or stole from her family. She recounts that after the war, it was a very difficult period for Estonians. They had much hostility towards the Red Army. The woman I

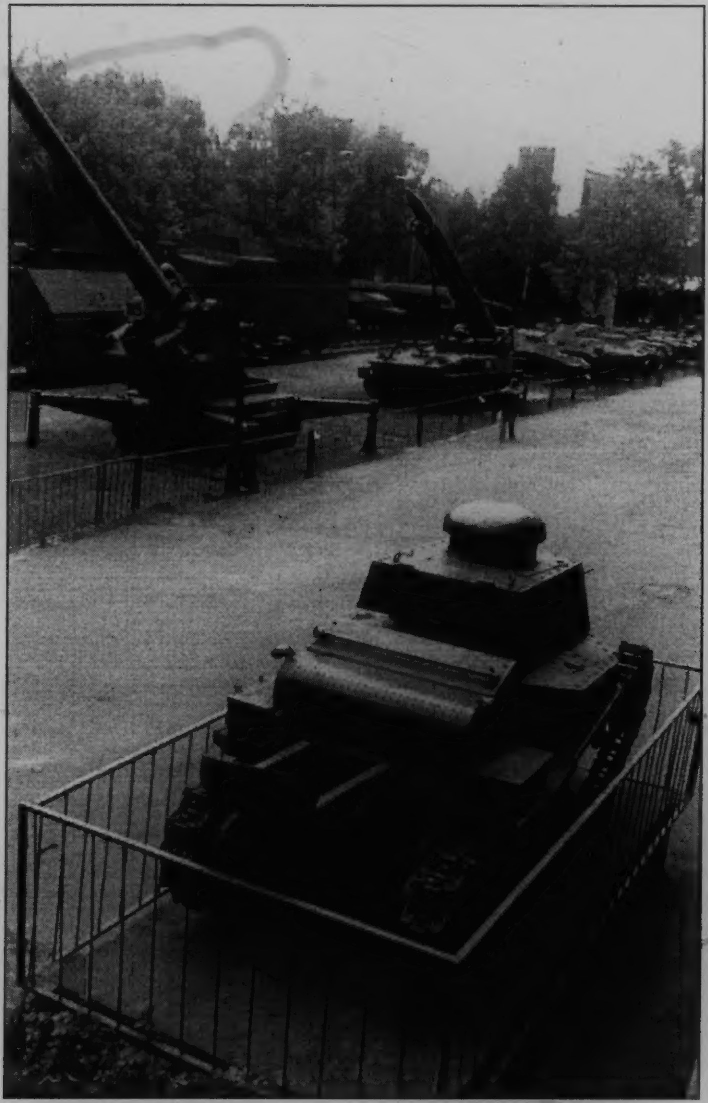

Figure 24: Museum of the Central Armed Forces, Moscow

interviewed spoke no Russian in 1944, and a few years after that she moved to Narva. It was very difficult, since she did not speak the language of the city that had been rebuilt by the Soviets, but she soon overcame her animosity. Interestingly, she considers Russians to be good—so good in fact that it makes them fools. In some ways, this should not come as a surprise, since she had accepted the stereotypes that define what a Russian is: the 'Russian Soul' and its attributes. I will be examining the Russian Soul in greater detail in a following chapter.

Any visitor is reminded through the use of monuments that the Red Army invaded Estonia. As I have examined in an earlier chapter, ruins have been preserved in Tallinn as a memorial to the Soviet invasion. Such monuments would have been unthinkable during the Soviet regime and these new monuments will strike a chord with those that lived through the Soviet invasion and annexation of Estonia. It goes without saying that most Estonians have a different social narrative that structures their memories of war. As a consequence, Estonians tend to see Russians and other non-Estonians from the former Soviet Union as colonizers, while the Russians see themselves as liberators, legitimate residents of Estonia.

The Estonians living in Narva are not the only ones to remember the war critically. After all, Estonia did have a small Russian minority prior to the War. One woman, a middle-aged Russian woman who was born in Narva, is critical of the Red Army for destroying Narva during the war. She states that her history of Narva does not come from any book, but rather from the stories her grandfather and parents told her. She explained that "Narva, of course, was most of all destroyed by the Soviet airforce. If it was not for all those bombs, that lasted two days, and if it were not for the absurd decision after the war to remove the remaining ruins, the city could have been restored." She does add that the Germans had also mined the city and blew up many buildings. However, she believed that enough remained after the war to restore the city to a semblance of its former self. However, a Soviet planner, allegedly of Estonian origin, had the old city centre bulldozed in order to make way for a new one.

The Russians who were born in Narva are in many ways much closer to the Estonians born in pre-War Narva than the later Russian immigrants are. They remember a different landscape and share a strong sense of nostalgia for what was lost. The Russian woman in question is putting a lot of effort into trying to have the old city restored. Another older Estonian man I interviewed in Narva showed me a Swedish book, illustrated with photos of Narva's old city. The present-day landscape of Narva is discordant with the landscape they once knew.

The woman whose family lived in Narva prior to the war also recounted that her aunt's memories of the 1940 Red Army advance into Estonia were not exactly as was shown in Soviet documentaries. According to the Soviet version of history, the Red Army entered Estonia with the consent of the Estonian government. Her aunt told her that thousands had fled the advancing Red Army.

The events of 1940 were not as orderly as the Soviet Union had portrayed it. These memories and this unofficial history meant that these inhabitants of the pre-War Estonian Republic did not accept the officially sanctioned history of the Great Patriotic War.

Most Russians in Narva do not consider themselves as occupiers, but rather think that the Red Army liberated Estonia. One veteran who wrote a piece in the newspaper *Estonia* says, "I wish to describe how the war went in Estonia. I was not only an eyewitness, but also a participant in the liberation operation. First of all, I want to remark that we, the participants in the war, didn't even harbor any thoughts of the conquest, or, like they now say, the occupation of Estonia. For us, she was a republic that had to be liberated from the Fascist invaders, who sat tight in her in order to advance further" (Chukhray 1995: 4). The consensus among the veterans who participated in the 1944 campaign in Estonia is that Estonians were not necessary guiltless in the war; in fact, the Germans had formed an Estonian division of the SS. This division had been sent to other theatres of war both in Russia and elsewhere in Eastern Europe to fight side by side with German soldiers.

Whether or not the Russians are occupiers or liberators is not a purely academic question. The Estonian State, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, did not grant citizenship to all the inhabitants of Estonia. Instead, only those who had resided in Estonia prior to 1941, and their descendants, could legitimately claim to be Estonians. The Estonian government applied the principle of restitution in order to justify the disenfranchisement of a third of its population: Estonia in 1991 had, according to this legal interpretation, been liberated from Soviet occupation, and the laws of the first Estonian Republic had been reinstituted. It follows that only those who had been citizens in the first Estonian Republic, and their descendants, could be citizens. The rest were illegal immigrants or colonizers. As Fridrikh Valler (1997: 5) states in a commentary published in the Russian-language newspaper *Estonia*, "incorporation is already not occupation", a rather loaded statement with political consequences. If all inhabitants of Estonia had been granted citizenship (and the right to vote in federal elections), there would not be only six Russian deputies out of a total of 101 in the *Riigikogu*, the Estonian legislature. Russians, according to the Statistical Office of Estonia, represented slightly more than 28% of the population in 1998. Ethnic Estonians, meanwhile, represented a bit more than 65% of the population according to the same source. As a consequence of the citizenship laws, ethnic Estonians are over-represented in the federal legislature. As elsewhere in Eastern Europe—and perhaps the world—one cannot dissociate politics from economics. Those in power can distribute wealth (jobs and contracts) and status. This is seen in Narva, where Estonians are quietly replacing Russians in positions of power and prestige.

As I stated earlier in this chapter, the purpose of my analysis of war memorials in Moscow was to better understand Narva's war memorials. Even thought it is no longer an official holiday, Russians continue to celebrate Victory Day in Estonia in a number of ways. As shall be discussed in another chapter on graveyards, Victory Day is considered an appropriate day to visit a graveyard and the graves of fallen soldiers. In 1995, the Russian Orthodox Church declared May 9 an official church holiday: the day of prayer for the dead killed on the field of battle.

In addition to visiting graves, people also visit memorials. In 1996, the newspaper *Estonia* chronicles in its May 10 edition how over a thousand people visited the Victory Memorial in Tallinn, leaving flowers at the foot of a bronze statue of the Unknown Soldier. In a photo published in the newspaper, an old man holds a sign that states in Russian, "Not a liberator, but a blood-stained occupant." Again, two versions of past events are in conflict in Estonia. In 1996, a hundred veterans also congregated in Peter's Square in Narva. They were accompanied by younger men, women, and children, all of whom bore flowers. The procession laid out the flowers at the foot of a nearby memorial, a stele, before dispersing to visit a number of other memorials located in the city and its outskirts.

In conclusion, both Narva's and Moscow's memorials dedicated to the Great Patriotic War are a part of the landscape in that they are cultural manifestations of a shared past. Though Lenin's statue was abandoned, Russians continue to visit war graveyards and war memorials. Together, they help to define the *Rodina* and justify the Russian presence in Estonia. Russians still value the fact that they defeated the Fascists and still remember those who died during the war. That is why most Russians refuse to consider themselves as occupiers in their city, their home, their *Rodina*. The war is remembered vividly, since it is considered a time when all the positive attributes of the Russian soul were clearly in evidence. The war ennobled the Russian soul and redeemed a people who, being divided by years of repression, were unified in the face of a common enemy.

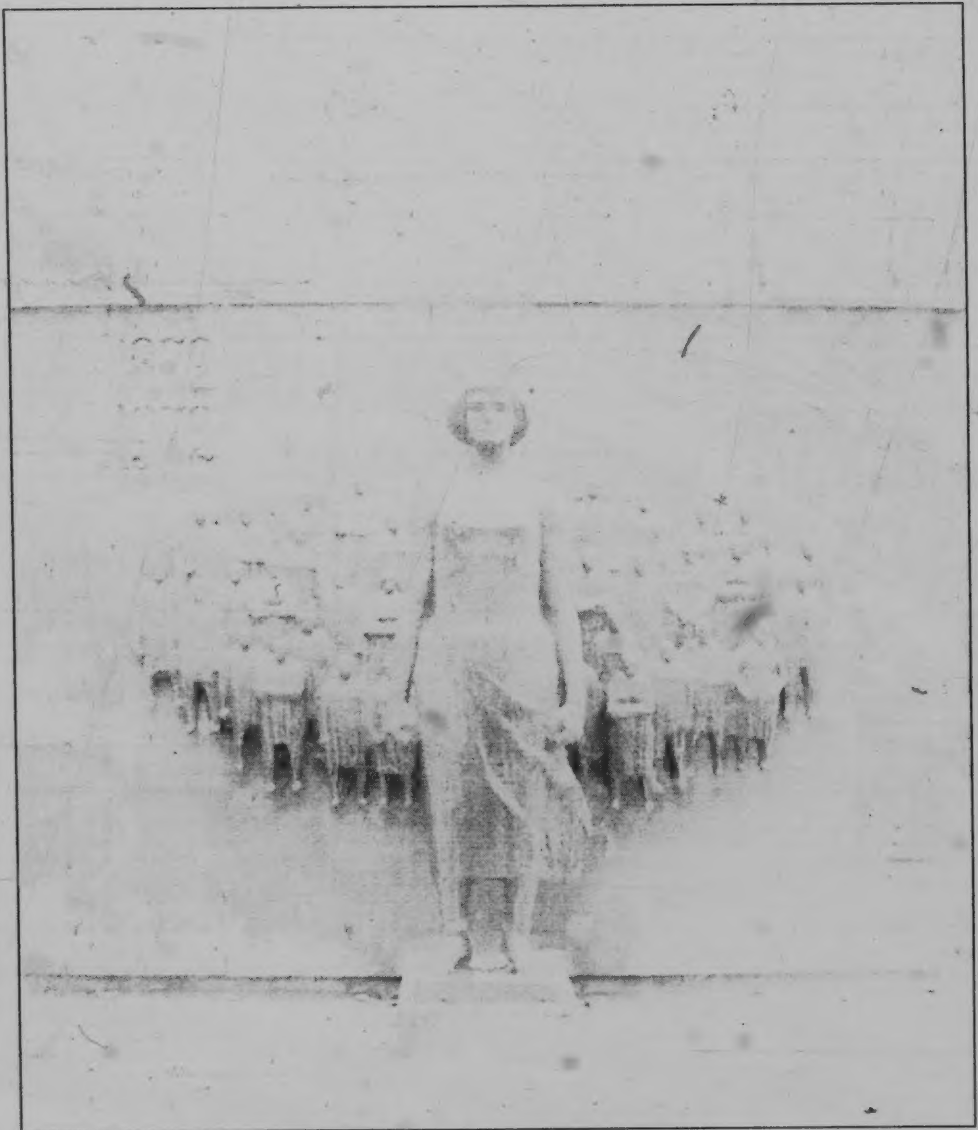

Figure 25: Memorial to Women Worker's, Narva

Chapter Four

The Political and Economic Situation of Russians in Narva and Estonia

In this thesis, I concentrate on the symbolic aspects of identity. I examined graveyards, memorials, and a number of other features inscribed into the social and physical landscape in order to come to a better understanding of how individuals create ties to the land and, as a result, define themselves. Nonetheless, the daily concerns of those people with whom I lived and interacted on a daily basis were mainly material and economic in nature. Most of my informants worried about jobs and money, and many communicated a certain degree of frustration with the policies of the Estonian State. They alleged that a process of Estonification was underway in which the Russian-speaking population was being reduced to a *lumpenproletariat*, an underclass. In this chapter, I explore the perspective of Russians in Estonia on these changes, and how their understanding of Estonian society guides their actions.

Background and Literature Review

The anthropological research I conducted in the late 1990s in Narva highlighted the economic dimensions of ethnicity. In the city of Narva, which is overwhelmingly Russian and Russian-speaking (over 95% of the population), local residents believed that the state was privileging the economic betterment of

Estonian nationals while paying little heed to the needs of the non-Estonians in the Republic. A common belief expressed among Russians was that being Estonian had become a profession in itself. Ethnic Estonians were privileged by the very fact that being a native speaker of the Estonian language ensured a good job. State policies were too often seen as economic tools being used to deny non-Estonians jobs. The legitimacy of state-mandated protection of language and culture is not something that can be resolved by research, but an analysis of state legislation in the cultural arena indicates that the state is rarely neutral when it comes to the distribution of jobs and resources. A state manages social and ethnic relations, as well as economic relations, through the use of language and cultural legislation. In sum, the state in a market-based economy is an important umpire in deciding the winners and losers of economic reform and transition.

In a decade of independence, Estonia has achieved remarkable economic prosperity when compared to the stagnation facing much of what was the Soviet Union. Yet, this economic growth has come at a cost. The increasing wealth of Estonian society has not been shared equally; as research indicates, there have been ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ in the new Estonian economy (see Raun 2001: 31; Lauristin and Vihalemm 1997: 109). As Mikko Lagerspetz, a researcher at the Estonian Institute of Humanities in Tallinn, comments, “it should be borne in mind, however, that the macroeconomic success seems to be reached at the cost of worsening economic conditions for large segments of the population” (2001: 409). The ranks of the ‘losers’ include women, as wage differentials between men and women have increased since the implementation of economic reforms[29], isolated rural populations, with the Southeast of Estonia being proportionally much poorer than Tallinn, the capital, and non-Estonians. The non-Estonians are 'losers' due to political factors; states, in spite of the hopes and fears of globalization, continue to play an important role in managing social relations within their borders, and majorities or dominant segments of the population with access to political power can implement laws and policies that favour certain ethnic or national groups in the economic arena of that state. State laws and policies managing language use can play a decisive role in shaping economic relations within society, even if this is not the overt intent of the legislation, I will now examine these factors.

The Transition to Independence and State Legislated Inequalities

Recent research has critically examined the role of the state in creating and maintaining economic inequalities. Lagerspetz examines the consolidation of democracy and a market economy as a form of 'hegemonization.' By this he means that the political goals of prosperity and international security were used to render illegitimate the demands of the "losers", notably Russian-speakers and other economically well-situated groups (2001: 402). This process is tied to the large number of Estonian residents who are not citizens (roughly a fifth of the population), and who are overwhelmingly Russian. As non-citizens, these individuals have little influence in the Estonian national political arena. Language laws, political disenfranchisement, and increasing economic disparities are closely woven together in Estonia. As Priit Järve notes, "even before new language laws were adopted in the Baltic States (in 1995 in Lithuania and Estonia, in 1999 in Latvia), the notion of the state language was employed by other laws to shape a policy of containment of Russian-speakers" (2002: 83). In recent years, the former director of the Estonian Citizenship and Migration Board admitted that legislators and civil servants were united in a common goal "to turn the life of Russians into hell" and to promote emigration instead of their naturalization (Järve 2002: 85). Even though large numbers of Russians and Russian-speakers did emigrate, by the end of the 1990s the numbers had been reduced from a high of 47,000 people leaving in 1992 and 1993 to a mere 1,100 people leaving in 1998 (Raun 2001: 33).

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[29] According to Toivo Raun, in 1999 the gender gap in wages was "substantial"; on average women earned 37% less than men. If anything, the wage gap was growing rather than closing (2001: 36).

Recent Estonian history has been shaped by a number of laws that were adopted promoting the Estonian language and the Estonian community. The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet declared the Estonian language the official state language in 1988, when Estonia was still a Soviet Republic. In January 1989, a language law was adopted requiring all officials working with the public to be proficient in the Estonian language, and defining six levels of proficiency (see Raun 1991: 237). In November 1991, the 1938 Citizenship Law was reestablished, and in this process of reinstitution it was

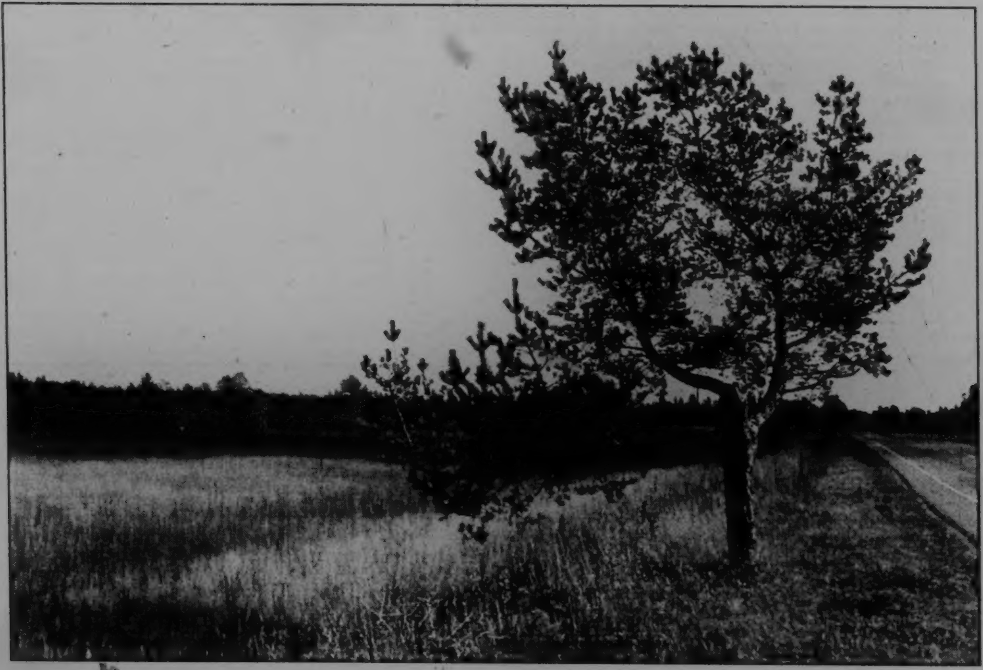

Figure 26: Narva Countryside

determined that only those individuals who had been citizens of Estonia prior to the Soviet invasion in 1941 and their descendants were automatically granted citizenship. As a consequence, most Russians were disenfranchised and this effectively barred Russian participation in the Estonian parliament; only one non-Estonian, an ethnic Swede, was elected in the September 1992 elections.

Citizenship and Inequalities

Though non-citizens were barred from voting in federal elections, accommodations were made for local elections. The Law on Local Elections adopted in 1993 allowed for resident non-citizens to vote in local elections, but only citizens could be elected to office. Resident non-citizens were provided the same social benefits as citizens, and could receive privatization vouchers for buying apartments or corporate shares.

In 1995, a new Citizenship Law was adopted that extended the residency requirement from two to five years and required that those applying for citizenship demonstrate their proficiency in the Estonian language and a knowledge of the Estonian Constitution and Citizenship Law. In the years following my fieldwork, the Citizenship Law was liberalized somewhat. In 1998 the law was amended to grant citizenship to the children of stateless parents born in Estonia. By 1999, immigration quotas were dropped on the issuance of residence permits, and the law on aliens was amended to ease the granting of residency permits to the non-Estonian spouses of Estonian citizens.

All told, Estonian laws are creating a minority that does not have an effective voice in the democratic affairs of the Estonian Republic. A great many Russians are politically powerless when it comes to federal laws and regulations: they are largely disenfranchised and therefore do not have much of a say in political decision-making at the national level. True, the basic human rights of Russians and others are respected, but many Russian-speakers claim that Estonia is an 'ethnic democracy' in that it is a democracy that works well for one ethnic group that is over-represented in the national legislature. This can only be understood by the decision not to grant automatic citizenship and voting rights in national elections to recent migrants, recent being defined by the Estonian law on citizenship as 1941 or later.

According to the Estonian Foreign ministry, there are roughly 1,445,100 individuals legally residing in Estonia, while there are only 1,152,240 Estonian citizens. This means that there are almost 300,000 people in Estonia who could not or did not become Estonian citizens. Given that only citizens can vote in the national elections, electing deputies for the *Riigikogu* (Estonian National Assembly), roughly one-fifth of the population of Estonia is ineligible to vote at the national level, although they can vote in municipal elections. This invariably distorts the electoral process. In the 1995 elections for the *Riigikogu*, 6 Russian deputies were elected out of a total of 101. In 1999, the Russian Party in Estonia was shut out of the Riigikogu and the only party with Russian deputies, the Estonia United People's Party, is the smallest faction in the *Riigikogu* with six deputies. In essence, even though they represent roughly one-third of the population, only a fraction of Russians and non-Estonians are eligible to vote in federal elections, and as a consequence they are represented by 5.9% of the deputies in the *Riigikogu*. In addition, there are no Russian ministers. It should be noted that parties are elected according to proportional representation in Estonia and a party has to obtain at least 5% of the popular vote before it obtains a deputy in the Riigikogu. The parties elected to the *Riigikogu* in 1999 represent 91.61% of the popular vote. This, in addition to the fact that the majority of Russian-speakers cannot vote in national elections, ensures that few Russian deputies are elected, and those Russian deputies are not selected to form the Estonian government. Any law passed by the Estonian Parliament could therefore be interpreted as detrimental to the Russian-speaking minority simply because the *Riigikogu* does not truly represent Russian-speakers. Ethnic Estonians have effectively ensured political dominance, and the *Riigikogu* has instituted laws, notably the law on languages, that are perceived by most Russian-speakers I spoke to as curtailing the advancement of Russians.[30]

The first elected parliament passed a series of new laws that were detrimental to Russian interests. According to Melvin, "The new mono-ethnic parliament subsequently passed a series of laws—of which the Law on Foreigners of 21 June 1993 was the most important—which further institutionalized the ethnic division of society" (1995: 45). The Law on Foreigners required that foreigners (all those who were not citizens according to the reinstated 1938 Citizenship law) be registered and that they apply for either permanent or temporary residency permits, and a two-year deadline was imposed. The Law on Aliens barred non-citizens from owning land, but they could lease land for 99 years. Immigration quotas were implemented. In 1993, a revised language law was also adopted, and this new legislation—along with the subsequent 1995 amended Language Law—reinforced the provisions of the earlier language legislation by, among other things, limiting the use of any foreign language on public signs, advertisements, and notices.

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[30] *Estonia Today*, the Estonian Republic's Foreign Ministry's information and fact sheet series; http://www.vm.ee.

The disenfranchisement of the majority of Russian-speakers ensures that the state can more easily pass laws that are detrimental to this group's well being. While I was in Estonia, new regulations were adopted on the importation of potatoes. Any person bringing more than a few kilograms of potatoes from Russia to Estonia had to pay a tariff. This tariff applied even to potatoes that were not destined for sale. This may appear insignificant; however, many older individuals who live in Narva own *dachas* in Russian territory. As is the case everywhere in Russia, the *dacha* is more than a summer cottage; it makes an essential economic contribution to the lives of Russians and others in the former Soviet Union. The *dacha* always includes a garden where the basic Russian foodstuffs are grown, including potatoes, beets and cabbage. The potatoes are then stored and serve as an essential part of the winter diet of the poor. Now, in Estonia, Russians with the misfortune of having a *dacha* on the other side of the border are faced with paying a tariff on the produce they grow over the summer for their own consumption. Clearly, this legislation does not benefit Russians from Narva, but there is little they can do to have this tariff rescinded.

Russians must now cope with the requirements of Estonian legislation. They now have to study the Estonian language, stand endlessly in line at the Department of Citizenship and Migration, and pay for the various language courses and exams[31]. They consider their jobs in the factories as being at risk, as the Estonian government was often perceived by the many Russian-speakers I interviewed as having little interest in ensuring that Russians in Estonia benefit from the new economy that is emerging.

Language and Inequalities

There are six different rankings attributed to non-native speakers of Estonian who are learning the language. These rankings, 'A,' 'B,' 'C,' 'D,' 'E,' and 'F,' classify a person's proficiency, with 'A' being the lowest and 'F' the highest. These rankings are determined by exams that have to be passed to achieve each rank. A separate language exam exists for citizenship purposes, and the required level of proficiency is somewhere between the 'D' and the 'E. Estonia has a Department of Language that classifies the language requirements

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[31] The language courses are an ingenious way to siphon money from Russian speakers. Each course in Narva cost between 400 to 800 crowns and several courses were necessary to pass the various Estonian language exams. As a point of reference, I have to specify that the minimum wage in Narva at the time was a bit more than 800 crowns per month. This meant that individuals had the option of paying for language courses or paying rent and buying food. One Russian director put it quite bluntly: learning the Estonian language is only a problem for the poor. Those individuals with money do not have any great difficulties since they can afford classes and tutors.

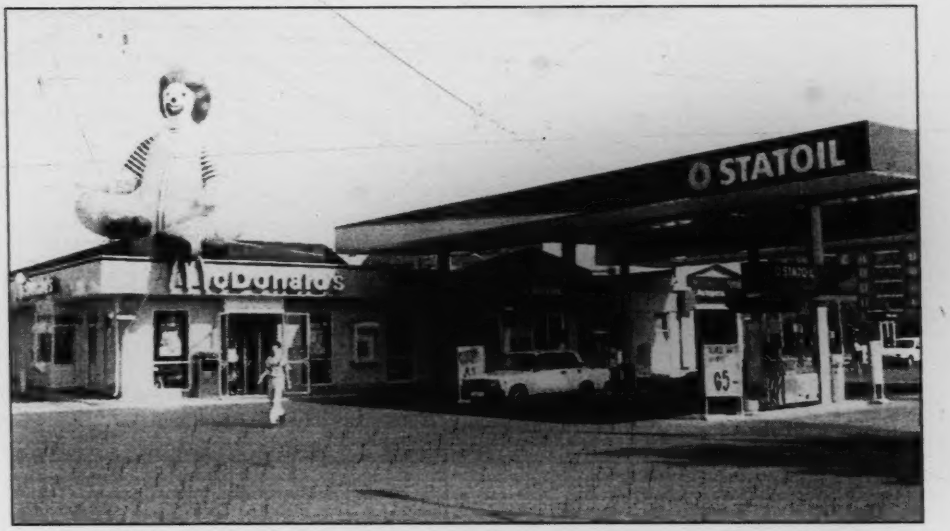
STATOIL
McDonald's
65-

Figure 27: Narva McDonald's

for various jobs. I was told, for example, that a sales clerk working in a store would have to demonstrate a 'C' level. In Tallinn, this seems to result in a segregation of ethnicity by job type. A case in point is the Sony Store I visited in Tallinn. The clerks in the store all spoke Estonian, whereas in the repair shop in back, all were speaking Russian. One store thus had two different groups occupying completely different functions.

The language of highly placed individuals is also tightly regulated. A director or manager of a private company is required by law to know Estonian. If one does not know the language, he or she can be fined. Elected officials are also required to know the Estonian language, and thus Narva has an Estonian mayor. The Department of Language also recommends that all financial documents and contracts be drafted in Estonian, since there is no guarantee that they would otherwise be recognized as legally valid. This thus necessitates Estonian translators even if a contract is concluded between two Russians. One person in Narva told me that one company lost a large sum of money because of a faulty translation.

The language legislation served to ensure that the knowledge of Estonian was necessary for employment, and this was widely understood. In 1997—the year I was conducting fieldwork—61% of respondents in Tallinn and the cities of the northeast (including Narva) agreed that "mastering Estonian is necessary to get a good job" (Järve 2002: 93). David Laitin also notes that "the belief that

Estonian is necessary for many professions has filtered through Narva" (1998: 116). Recent legislation has served to cement the necessity of fluency in Estonian; in early 1999, the language law was amended to require all employees of private companies, non-profit associations, and foundations to have proficiency in the use of the Estonian language while doing business in Estonia.[32] Naturally, representatives of ethnic minority communities interpreted this as "a deliberate move of the state to tilt the conditions of economic competition on the Estonian market in favor of the native speakers of Estonian" (Järve 2002: 87). This is not surprising, as when I was doing my fieldwork in Narva two years prior, less stringent legislation was interpreted in exactly the same fashion, as will be reviewed later in this chapter. Geoffrey Evans and Christine Lipsmeyer view such language legislation as a confirmation of "the distinctively hard-line nature of ethnic relations in Estonia" (2001: 394). The Education Minister is cited as having replied to the allegations that the changes in the language legislation would increase unemployment by stating that the new requirements "will encourage non-Estonians to learn Estonian" (Evans and Lipsmeyer 2001: 394). Whether this will be the case is debatable, but statistical evidence clearly demonstrates that unemployment rates are higher among non-citizens, who are mainly Russians, than among citizens, who tend to be ethnic Estonians or non-ethnic Estonians who passed the necessary language exams to obtain their citizenship (Aasland 2002: 71).

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[32] This legislation would have required language proficiency not only for local minorities, but for any foreigner working in Estonia even for short periods of time. This was criticized by the European Union and in June 2000 the language requirements for foreign experts were abolished.

Language in Normal States

The Russians of Estonia are not completely unfamiliar with Estonian concerns. The major Russian language newspapers in Estonia will carry, in translation, articles and opinion pieces published in Estonian language newspapers or pieces submitted to them for publication. However, that does not necessarily mean that these articles will convince Russians reading them to change their minds. In the case of the issue of language, a compromise is not possible, since two completely different ways of examining the legitimacy of Estonia's language laws exist. On one end of the spectrum is the opinion, held largely by Estonian commentators, which argues that Estonia's language laws exist in order to ensure that Estonia becomes a 'normal' European state—a state where there is a sole state language spoken by all. Those holding this ideal would certainly look to England, France, and Germany as models of 'normality.' In the Russian language press, commentators are especially fond of citing Estonia's closest European ally, Finland, as an example of a European state that has more than one official language. The Finnish state is bilingual, and the Swedish language and community in Finland benefit from a number of rights.[33] Many Russians would like to see the Russian language granted the same status in Estonia as the Swedish language has in Finland.

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[33] I can attest to that: when in Helsinki, I went to see an American movie subtitled in both Finnish and Swedish.

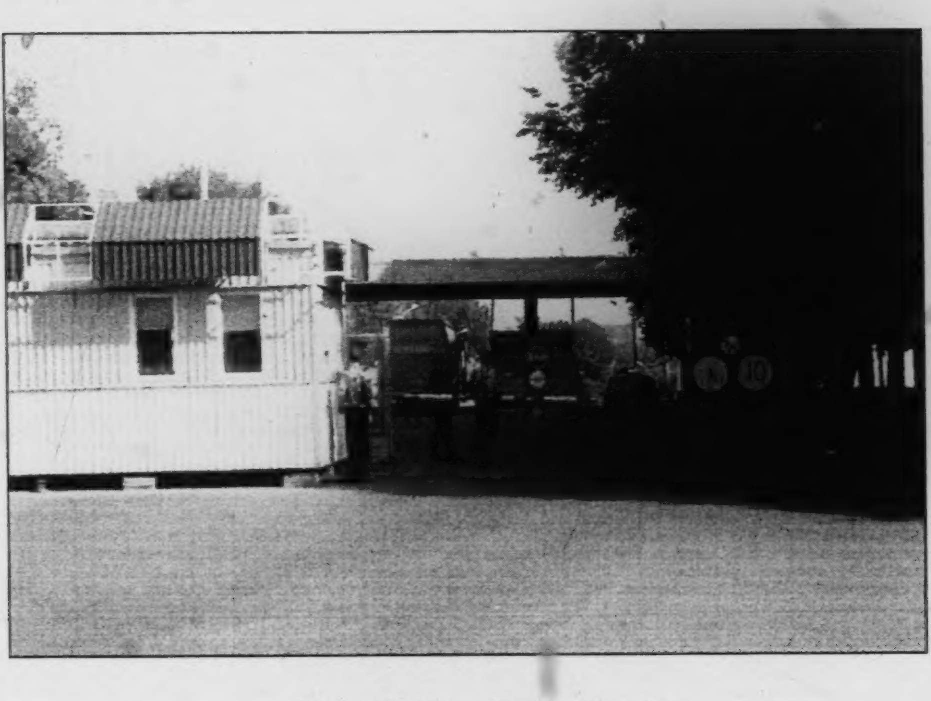

Figure 28: Narva Border Crossing

These competing visions of 'normal' states are not unique to Estonia. In many ways, it was the dominant model of the nation in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. It is still the dominant model that carries favour with many individuals, even in countries such as Canada, which is officially bilingual. It is a model that should be familiar to most North Americans since this model of the normal state guided the politics of both Canada and the United States well into the 1960s. This model has as a premise that in order to be strong, a nation must have one people, one language, and—ideally—one religion. To have many languages is to promote disunity according to this model. That is why, for example, many Canadian provinces outlawed the teaching of students in any language other than English. To quote one early 20th century Alberta government official, "This is an English-speaking province and every Alberta boy and girl should receive a sound English education in the public schools of the province" (Prokop, 1989: 3).

The same process is visible in Estonia, with a prime example being the laws that effectively ensure that no Russian-language television station can be established. Any Russian-language television program must be accompanied by Estonian sub-titles, making live Russian productions virtually impossible The justification that is given is that Estonians have a right to know what fellow Estonians are saying. Again, this law ensures the predominance of the Estonian language. However, it is also a question of money and jobs. In 1997, *The Baltic Times* reported that one official speculated the language law was to be enforced,

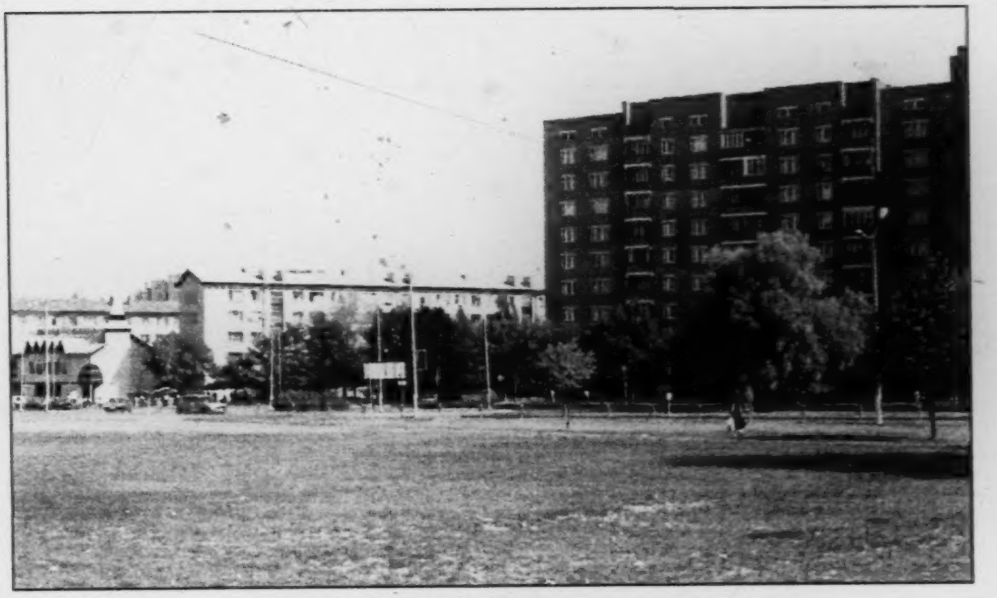

Figure 29: City Centre Apartment Buildings

after four years, in order to ensure that a Russian-language TV channel would never be formed.[34] If such a network were founded, it would invariably siphon advertising money away from Estonian broadcasters, undermining their financial viability. Blocking the creation of a Russian language TV channel has political repercussions, since it delays the creation of a coherent Russian minority that could threaten the integrity of the Estonian Republic. As it now stands, the only Russian television stations that are available in Estonia are those that originate from Russia and the Estonian government is canceling subscriptions to those channels.

Estonia's language laws are thus as much an economic tool as a political tool. According to the Chief language board inspector, "we are in charge of monitoring language every place, from the nursery to the graveyard" (Rikken, *The Baltic Times*). Government legislation, then, can have economic consequences that are not necessarily stated in the law. The language laws can be activated whenever Russian competition threatens the economic interests of ethnic Estonians. This is then justified by the state's apparent fear of the minority. To quote the language inspector: "Say I am a viewer. I am very interested in knowing what Russians are being told about Estonia." The question that arises is who exactly are these Russians? Is he referring to Russians living in the Russian Federation, or to Russians living in Estonia proper? This, again, can be attributed to the widely held perception that Russians are not loyal citizens of Estonia simply because they are Russian.

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[34] Kristopher M. Rikken, "Language law to be fully enforced" in *The Baltic Times*, March 27-April2, 1997, page 4

Estonians, including the director of an electrical power company in Narva, pride themselves that Russians in Estonia benefit from all the fundamental human rights. However, certain government policies do bode ill for the Russians in Estonia. A case in point was an Estonian law on demonstrations that was adopted in 1997. This law obliges any organizers to notify officials when they plan on holding demonstrations. In one sense, this can be seen as quite reasonable: it allows for public officials to ensure that demonstrations occur peacefully. However, in Estonia, the law gives the Executive of the Estonian Government the right to call off meetings it considers anti-state and immoral. According to *The Baltic Times*, "the law is clearly designed with non-citizens in mind" (April 3-9, 1997, editorial on p.23). I suspect that any public meeting held by Russians would more than likely be interpreted as anti-state. Interestingly, even *The Baltic Times* considered this law to be excessive: "And even though there are people who oppose all of Estonia, they should be entitled under the natural laws cited in the constitution to express their opinion in a peaceful manner." Furthermore, in Estonia, authorities could indict an individual for sedition, even if they are not implicated in the transfer of state secrets to other states. An interesting example is the investigation that was underway in 1996 against Yuri Mishin, a prominent Russian activist in Narva. This investigation was launched under article 62 of the criminal code–sedition–which is punishable with a maximum prison term of ten years. As *The Baltic Times* reported, "The entire activity of Mishin since 1993 can be viewed as having been directed against the state institutions of the Republic of Estonia, said the deputy director of the security police" (Lya Oll, "Non-citizen activist investigated", May 16-22, 1996, page 8). Mishin's crime: he took part in the organization of the 'anti-Estonian' referendum in Narva, a referendum that sought greater autonomy for Narva and the predominantly Russian Northeast of Estonia.

Even though I saw no evidence that individual Russian-speakers are a threat to the integrity of the Estonian State, extraordinary measures are being taken to ensure that the Russians do not threaten it. It is evident that Estonians and Russians do not necessarily share the same vision of the Russian Federation; where Estonians see a potential invader, Russian-speakers see a Federation that means Estonia no harm. Regardless of whether these fears are grounded, there are citizenship and language laws that oblige Russians to learn Estonian, and a law regarding demonstrations that limits non-citizens'—read Russians'—right to assemble and hold public demonstrations. Estonian laws, from the perspective of many Russian speakers, ensure that Estonians have the distinct economic advantage of access to better jobs and patronage.

For such reasons, it should come as no surprise that many Russians see themselves as economically disfavoured in addition to being, for the most part, disenfranchised. Again, according to Russian-speakers, any native speaker of Estonian will have an advantage over a Russian-speaker. If an Estonian speaker

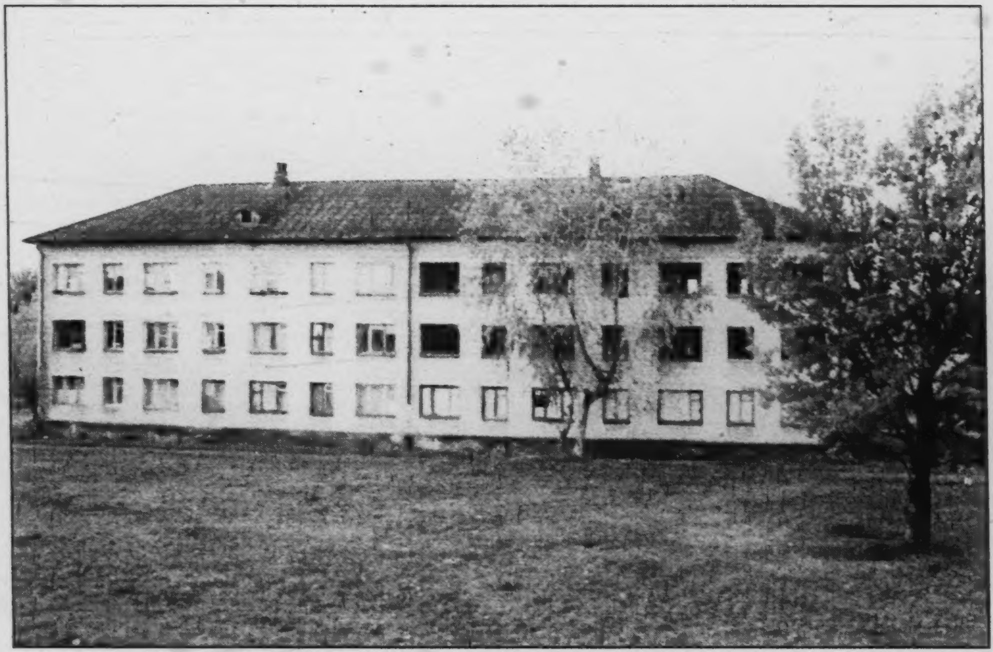

Figure 30: Dilapidated Apartment, Narva

knows a bit of Russian, they can work as a translator. As one informant noted, they can work as a translator even if they are not truly literate in their native language, which results in costly translation errors (as noted in a preceding paragraph). A native Estonian speaker can also teach Estonian. Also, they can work in any job without having to worry whether they qualify, since they do not require ranking by the Department of Language.

One manager in Narva was quite blunt about the matter of Estonia's language laws. She had passed all the language exams without much difficulty, but she could afford a private tutor. She told me quite frankly that the rich in Narva have no difficulty passing the language exams, since they can afford to pay whatever is necessary to learn the language. The workers, though, cannot necessarily afford tutors or language courses, so they will have greater difficulty obtaining their citizenship and passing language exams to qualify for better jobs. The generosity of business managers or owners can help. For example, I met with the owner of a leather factory whose family had been in Narva for several generations. He became a citizen by virtue of being able to trace his ancestry to the first Republic of Estonia; in order to help his workers, he paid for language courses to ensure that all those who wanted to become citizens had the chance to learn the Estonian language.

The Estonian Republic should not be singled out for reproach, as all states to varying degrees manage ethnicity and language and thus play a role in the economic success or failure of individuals. As Christine Chin notes, the anticipated demise of the state is premature. Rather than becoming obsolete, "state economic power can be strengthened in partnership with, or in the service of, transnational capital" (Chin 2000: 1035). The state is not entirely subservient to transnational capital, as the state is still required to perform regulatory functions in the economy and society (Chin 2000: 1036). In her case study of Malaysia, Chin describes the ways in which the state promoted the economic interests of the Malay majority; she explains how, "depending on the context then, state power that is crucial to the construction and regulation of social order is based on intersections of key identity dimensions such as class, gender, race-ethnicity and religion" (Chin 2000: 1037-1038). In the case of Malaysia, the state functioned as an "affirmative action development program designed to bring the Malay community (the marginally largest ethnic group) to socioeconomic parity with the Chinese (who were the more wealthy and powerful of the non-Malay groups in the country)" (Chin 2000: 1042). The state plays a similar role in Estonia, as the Preamble to the Estonian Constitution, according to Järve, "establishes, in fact, 'ethnic democracy'" as it states that the state must guarantee the preservation of the Estonian nation and its culture throughout the ages (2002: 95-96). This leads to the question of whether or not majority languages need protection (Järve 2002: 98). The answer would depend upon which side of the ethnic divide an individual stands; ethnic minorities would likely view laws to protect majority Estonian language and culture as impediments to their economic success, while the majority would tend to favour such legislation as a means to protect a threatened language and culture. While the necessity of legislation is a value judgment, the economic effects are themselves undeniable; state language and culture legislation will lead to economic benefits for some and possible economic losses for others.

The Fate of Russian-Language Schools

The next step in the creation of a 'normal' state is the gradual closure of minority schools. The year 2000 was set as the deadline for the closure of all Russian secondary schools. When I was in Estonia, the deadline had been extended, but the state had every intention of closing all Russian schools so that all secondary students would be educated in Estonian. This policy risks raising the ire of Russians who may wish their children be educated in Russian, not in Estonian.

Estonian language laws are used to justify the closure of Russian schools; however, the economic imperative is masked in the discourse of defense. According to Sulev Alejoe, vice chairman of the Conservative and Republican People's Party (right wing nationalist party), instituting Estonian as the language of instruction in schools was the basis of protecting the Estonian language and culture; "The language laws he pointed out, require a knowledge of Estonian in almost every field of employment and the state should not pay to educate Russian youths who had no intention of learning the language and preparing for the labor

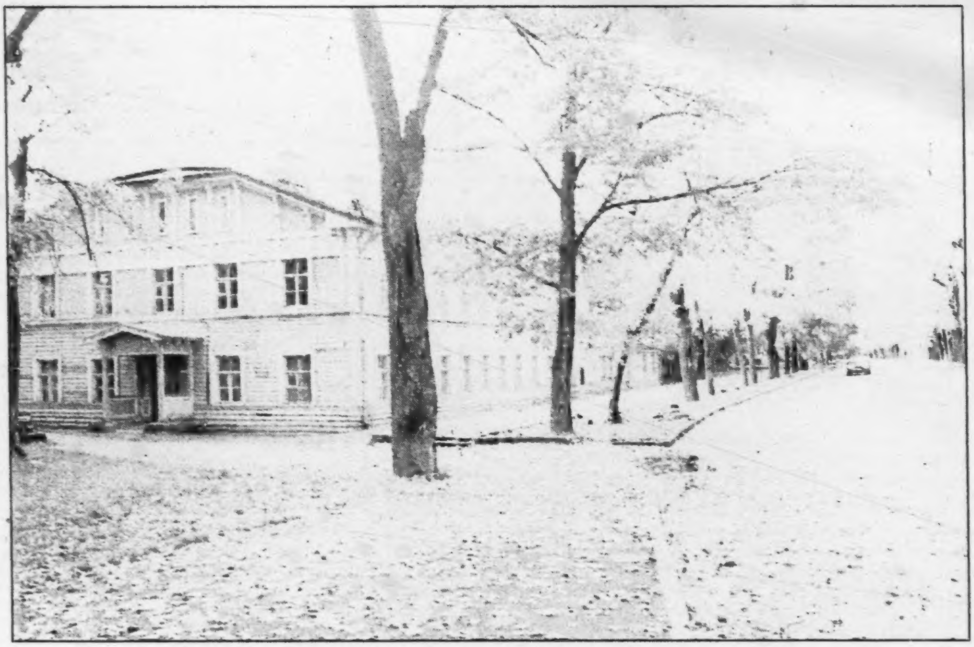

Figure 31: Apartment in Older Section of City, Narva

market".[35] Estonian nationalists therefore justify the closure of Russian schools on the basis of Estonian language laws that require knowledge of Estonian in all jobs throughout the Republic. It could be argued that it would be much simpler to eliminate some of the requirements of the language laws, but that would 'threaten' the nation. Russians, for the most part, are opposed to closing Russian schools.

In Eastern Europe, as is the case elsewhere to varying degrees, political power equals economic power. In the Estonian press, there were many cases reported where government officials received renovated apartments for free. In 1997, the Prime Minister was implicated in a scandal; it had been shown that he received an apartment through improper channels (Editorial in *The Baltic Times*, "To have and have not", January 23-29, 1997, p. 23). Also, children of the political elite are often sent to study in private schools in Western Europe. Though corruption in Estonia is not quite as flagrant as in Russia, it is nonetheless present. In Narva, for example, there were some reports that municipal officials were working for several private companies and receiving lavish salaries several times greater than the average salary of the inhabitants of Narva. These companies would then bid—often quite successfully—for contracts to provide certain public services. Estonians who are part of the political power structure can benefit greatly from a policy that favours one ethnic group over another.

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[35] "Russian school debate heats up" by James Carrol, *The Baltic Times,* November 21-27, 1996, p.4.

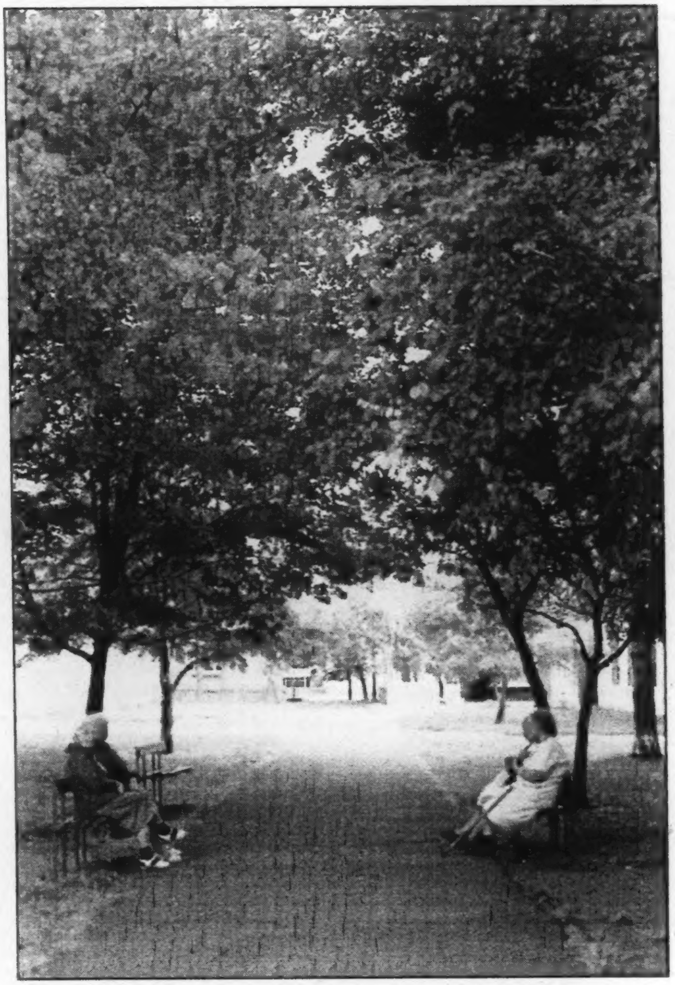

Figure 32: "Grandmothers", Narva

The Transition to a Market-Based Economy and the Resulting Inequities

Narva was and remains a largely industrial city. Even back in Imperial Russian times, the Krenholm factory produced textiles for export. During Soviet times, Estonia's oil shale deposits were mined and used in the manufacture of electricity. A number of manufacturing plants produced a variety of goods such as furniture. Narva also produced high technology goods for the Soviet military (see Kochenovskii, 1991). The neighbouring resort-city of Narva-Jöesuu attracted thousands of Leningraders who spent summer holidays on its beaches. Narva, then, had a diversified economy and the citizens had jobs. True, the citizens could not buy imported goods, but even a pensioner could afford to buy food and take a yearly vacation to the Black Sea or elsewhere in the Soviet Union. The fact that Estonians can now freely travel to Western Europe does not necessarily mean much to the average citizen of Narva, as many cannot afford to go to Tallinn, let alone Finland or Germany.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Estonia's industrial policy changed. State enterprises were sold, often to foreign interests. The industry producing goods for the Soviet military was dismantled. (See Lauristin and Vihalemm, 1997 for an account of Estonia's policy of maximum liberalization). What remains is for sale. Estonia is trying to find a buyer for the electric generating stations, but when I was in Narva, the state had yet to find a credible buyer. An obscure American company had come forward with an offer, but the

Figure 33: Children Playing, Narva

negotiations were going quite badly since the company was unwilling or unable to produce any concrete plans as to what it was going to do with the electric generating stations once it actually bought them.

The Estonian State sold Narva's textile industry to Swedish interests who quickly set about downsizing. Whereas 12,000 people had once worked for Krenholm manufacturing, it was projected when I was in Narva that fewer than 2,000 would eventually remain. It should be noted that in Soviet times, a company offered a number of services to its employees: it ran day-care centers and it owned resorts where the workers could spend their vacations. These were eliminated in the process of privatization. The Swedes did invest in new machinery to make the manufacturing plant more productive, but this came at a price: many lost their jobs.

A number of Russians in Narva are cynical of the Estonian government's plans. According to an older man, the Estonian government did everything it could to close down Narva's factories so Russians would be unemployed. One example is the status of Narva's Russian-speaking police officers. Estonian law requires that police officers, as all other government employees, must be Estonian citizens. A deadline was set for firing any non-citizens. However, when I was in Estonia in 1997, this deadline was extended for practical reasons; most of the police officers in Narva and Northeast Estonia would have lost their jobs, and the state would have been faced with a shortage of officers. This decision angered many Estonian politicians. *The Baltic Times*, a newspaper that is far from sympathetic to the cause of the Russians (who are "settlers" or "colonists" in the parlance of the newspaper), ran an article critical of the decision. A letter written by the Union of Municipalities and read by the Deputy Speaker of the Estonian Parliament was cited in *The Baltic Times*. In this letter, the Union wrote how "Firing Russian-minded and Russian-speaking officials would have been no catastrophe." Some deputies are quoted in the same article, as saying this decision was a "crime against the Estonian people" ("Russophone cops get second chance" in *The Baltic Times*, January 23-29, 1997, p. 4). It is clear that the Estonian Parliament is openly hostile to the concerns of Russians, and it is not surprising in such a context that the few Russian deputies have banded together in a Russian Party. However, the political power of Russian-speakers is quite limited. The vast majority of Russian-speakers have not acquired Estonian citizenship, so they cannot vote in federal elections.

There are no accurate figures for the rate of unemployment in Narva. Official figures, even government officials admit, grossly underestimate the number of jobless, but Narva's unemployment rate was at least 20 % when I was doing my fieldwork. Officially, between 2% and 6% of the total population of Estonia may be unemployed at any given time, which would be considered full employment in the West. However, this is simply the number of individuals who apply for and receive government financial aid. Given that not all qualify and that the benefits are quite limited, this number is inaccurate. According to one government official cited in the newspaper *Narvskaia gazeta*, the number of people without work in Narva in 1997 was closer to 10,000 out of a total population of eligible workers of 41,900 individuals. This would mean that nearly 25% of the working population of Narva was unemployed.[36] Even though this number may not reflect the number of individuals looking for work—some would be young mothers who are entitled to benefits—it is much closer to the actual figure than the lower official figures cited by the Estonian government.

The government official cited in the above article mentions a number of causes for Narva's high unemployment. Without a good economic program things will not get any better. Tourism and transit duties—fees levied when goods are shipped through Estonia—were seen as potential sources of employment for the inhabitants of Narva, but even though they have been much talked about, they have not led to many concrete results. Narva is disadvantaged in that it cannot expect much support from the state. The large majority of the legal residents of Narva cannot vote in federal elections, since they do not have citizenship.

It is true that Estonia has had economic growth in the last few years, but this growth has been quite lopsided. The problems faced by Narva are not unique. They are the very same challenges faced by all peripheral regions of Estonia. The capital receives the lion's share of investment. As a case in point, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) donated more than one million dollars a year for several years after Estonia became an independent country. However,

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[36] Cited in the article "Unemployed mothers and the hopeless children of Narva" or "Bezrabotnye mamy i besperspektivnye deti Narvy" by A. Miasoedov, *Narvskaia gazeta*, June 5, 1997, p.2

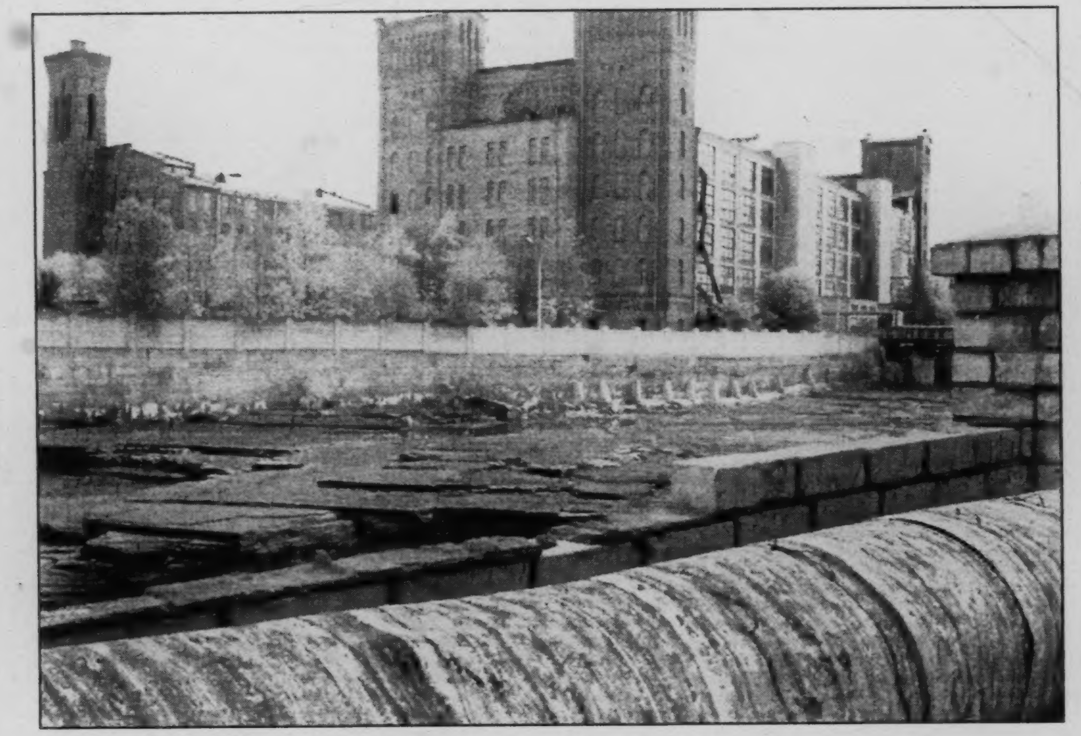

Figure 34: Historic Krenholm Factory, Narva

virtually all that money was spent in Tallinn; little of the money actually made its way to the other regions of Estonia, including some where ethnic Estonians predominate.

The Estonian capital also benefits from its ties with Helsinki and Stockholm. The capital of Finland is less than two hours away by hydrofoil, and the Estonian capital city has built up quite a lucrative tourist industry, catering to the Finns' and Swedes' tastes for cheap goods. A good friend, Inna, works in Tallinn's large market. There, rows upon rows of stalls sell clothes, food, beer, souvenirs, and every other consumer good imaginable. In the parking lot, there is an entire cavalcade of luxury taxis ready and waiting to return foreigners back to the city centre. In downtown Tallinn, many bars, restaurants, hotels, souvenir shops, and other businesses cater to these tourists. Narva does not benefit from the influx of foreign money in the same way as Tallinn. The odd tourist may brave the negative propaganda and venture to Narva, but the city cannot rival Tallinn as a tourist attraction. It is a rather significant hinderance that Narva's natural market—St. Petersburg—is virtually shut off from Narva; Estonia requires visitors from the Russian State to have an invitation and visa in order to visit the country, thus discouraging large numbers of Russian visitors.. It must be noted that Narva is closer to St. Petersburg (110 km) than it is to Tallinn (140 km).

Estonia's economic policies and goals fuel certain Russian extremists in Estonia. Though Russian extremists are quite marginal in Narva, they do exist, and they do tend to be associated with Narva's Union of Russian Citizens. The grievances that fuel the leadership of this association are quite numerous: Estonia's citizenship and language laws, the perceived attacks on the Russian culture, and the increasing inequalities that divide Estonians and Russians. However, economics do play a role in stereotypes. One person I spoke to went as far as to consider the Estonians 'parasites.' In his opinion, Estonians cannot work and have been living off of others for generations. Though such prejudices are not a reflection of reality, they can be understood in the context of groups in competition for status and scarce resources, notably good jobs.

Many people question the Estonian government's politics. One person was quite cynical of the Swedish purchase of Krenholm Manufacturing, as he believed that the Swedes were more interested in buying out a potential competitor than investing in Narva. Another person lamented the government's quick dismantling of the alleged military plant; she felt that had the Estonian government acted intelligently, they would have ensured that those workers would have stayed in Narva. She firmly believed that Estonia foolishly forced some of the Soviet Union's best researchers out of Narva, and that, had they stayed in Estonia, they could have contributed to the future economic development of the country.

It should be noted that the new Swedish owners of Krenholm manufacturing also contributed to the 'Estonification' of Narva when the Russian upper cadres were replaced by Estonians[37]. It was believed that Estonians would be better suited for managing the plant, since they would prove to be invaluable when the enterprise had any dealings with the Estonian government. Estonians are also placed in positions of power in state-owned enterprises since they are seen to be more 'loyal.' The paradox is that many of these same high ranking officials were members of the communist power structures. A local government official, for example, openly acknowledged that he had been a member of the KGB, yet this did not disqualify him from being the director of a local enterprise and a high-ranking official in the municipal government. These two examples clearly demonstrate the defining feature of the economics and politics of nationalism in Narva: ethnic Estonians, by the virtue of their ethnicity, are seen as loyal Estonians, regardless of what they may have done in the past while Russians are considered suspect by the state simply because they are Russian. Now that the state is firmly Estonian, 'loyal' Estonians are placed in positions of power, both economic and political.

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[37] There is an apparent truism that dominates the writing of both Estonians and foreigners. There is a dominant portrayal of the Russians as having a Soviet mindset. True, the Russian population for the most part arrived during Soviet times, but it is equally true that the majority of Estonians were born during Soviet times or grew up in Soviet times. There is no reason why the Russians should have a Soviet mindset and not the Estonians. Marju Lauristin and Peeter Vihalemm, two Estonian researchers point out that it is the young that are having the least difficulty adapting and succeeding in the new Estonia (see 1997: 109) and this is understandable since they are the ones who would not have grown up under the Soviet regime. The Soviet mindset would thus be not only a question of ethnicity but one of age and historical circumstance.

[43] Information gathered from the Statistical Office of Estonia website: <http://www.stat.vil.ee>.

Economic Indicators: Emerging Economic Stratification

The existing statistical evidence does indicate that ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers have been at a disadvantage in Estonia as a whole, particularly in the northeast where Narva is located. In the latest report of the *European Union Accession Monitoring Program: Minority Rights*, the authors highlight that the Commission was critical of Estonia's treatment of its minority ethnic populations and the potential of Estonia's citizenship and language laws to favour ethnic Estonians (2000: 177).

Government policy and practices seem to have encouraged a vertical mosaic within Estonian society. As the report *Minority Protection in Estonia* highlights, "The income of non-Estonians has been consistently 10-20 percent lower than that of Estonians" (Semjonov, Poleshchuk and Arjupin, 2001: 202). Additionally, the report shows that unemployment rates for non-Estonians are much higher than for ethnic Estonians; in the first quarter of 2000, the unemployment rate for non-Estonians was 19.9% as opposed to 11.8% for ethnic Estonians (2001: 202). Also, there are indications that Russians are increasingly unemployed for longer durations; in 1995, the non-Estonians had a 10% advantage—only 26.9% of unemployed non-Estonians were without jobs for more than 12 months as compared to 36.3% for Estonians—but by 1998, 51.8% of non-Estonians were unemployed for more than a year as compared to 45% for Estonians (Eamets et. al. 1999: 42). Not only do non-Estonians (mainly Russians) earn less and suffer from higher rates and seemingly more prolonged periods of unemployment, but also they are limited in their social mobility, as many leading positions in the public sector are reserved for citizens (Aasland and Flotten 2001: 1029). As we have seen the language laws favour ethnic Estonians, their upward social mobility unrestricted by laws that test fluency in Estonian.

The World Bank's report, *Employment and Wage Dynamics in the Estonia Transition, 1989-1995*, highlights the downward trend of the social mobility of non-Estonians in the Estonian Republic. According to this report, the differential in wages, only 3% in 1989, increased to 11% by 1992, and doubled to 22% by 1995 (Noorkoiv et. al. 1997: 17). The authors are unable to explain these falling returns for non-Estonians, as the ability to speak Estonian was included as a separate regressor; moreover, these declining wages occurred at every experience level. According to the report, "This suggests that immigrant educational attainment did not translate into mobility toward sectors with rising returns to skill, or that those returns to skill were not obtained" (Noorkoiv et. al. 1997: 17).

The city of Narva was particularly hard-hit by the structural changes that occurred in Estonia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The main industries in this city located on the Russian border in Northeast Estonia are manufacturing and

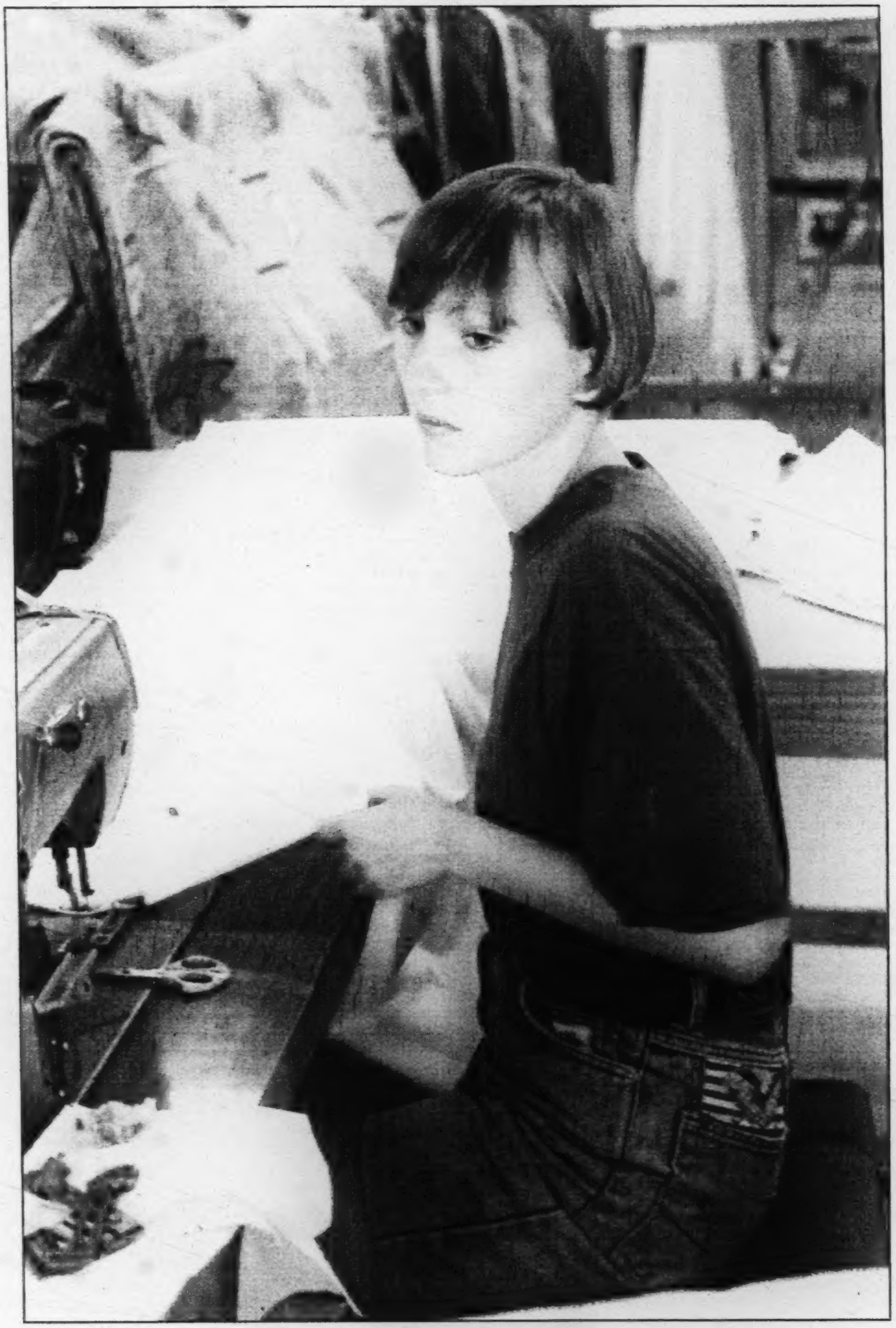

Figure 35: Worker in Modern Krenholm Factory, Narva

electricity production. These two industries have been hard hit by changing economic policies; overall full-time manufacturing employment declined by 25% between 1989 and 1994 (Noorkoiv et. al. 1997: 9). This has left Narva with unemployment rates that soar above the national average. In 1998, the county in which Narva is located had an unemployment rate of 14.7%. By 2000, the rate had soared to 21.1%. In the capital, the unemployment rate remained relatively stable, increasing from 9.4% to 12.1%.[43] Not only is the unemployment rate higher, but the average net income lags behind the national average; from 1998 to 2000, the average net income dropped from 77.5% of the national average to 74.6%. Overall, the Northeast and the Southeast suffer from significantly higher rates of unemployment, up to 23% as of the year 2000, and average net incomes as low as 64.7% of the national average. The unemployment rates are steadily increasing as jobs in the manufacturing sector are declining and fewer new jobs are being created compared to Tallinn and other regions of Estonia (Eamets et. al. 1999: 22).

Class and Society in Narva

An important point to bear in mind is that there is definitely a class structure in Narva, and this affects the perception certain Russians have of Estonian society. The highly educated members of the Russian-speaking community are quite sympathetic to the language and citizenship policies of the

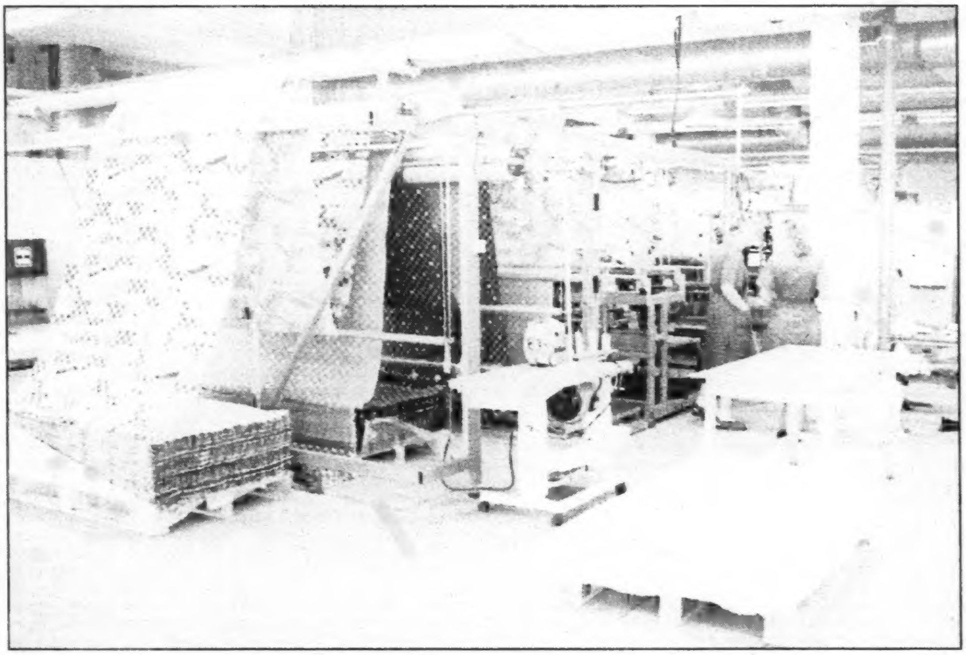

Figure 36: Inside Modern Krenholm Factory, Narva

Estonian State. One Russian man, for example, believed that it was necessary for the Estonian government to disenfranchise the vast majority of Russian-speakers in order to change the Soviet mindset of most Russians. The Russian-speaking politicians who now belonged to the municipal government were also, as can be expected, very much in agreement with the policies of the state. The local newspapers and radio stations were certainly not 'anti-Estonian'; the Russian-speaking national press in Estonia did have an agenda, but for the most part they favoured Estonia becoming a bilingual state with both Estonian and Russian as official languages. The mainstream Russian-language media in Estonia simply disagreed with the policies that were adopted by the state and they wanted Estonia to grant citizenship to all those who were residing in Estonia at the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. They also wanted to ensure the survival of Russian language and culture in Estonia.

Labourers and pensioners were, of course, more critical of the policies of the state than the academics. I met with one high-ranking union official who first introduced to me the idea of 'Estonification'. He believed that there was a clear government policy to replace high-ranking officials in public and private enterprise with ethnic Estonians. He did not believe that Narva would become less Russian in terms of ethnic composition, but that the positions of power were subtly being given to Estonians. Also, he worried about the industrial policies of the state, since Narva's industrial base was shrinking. Even those industries that

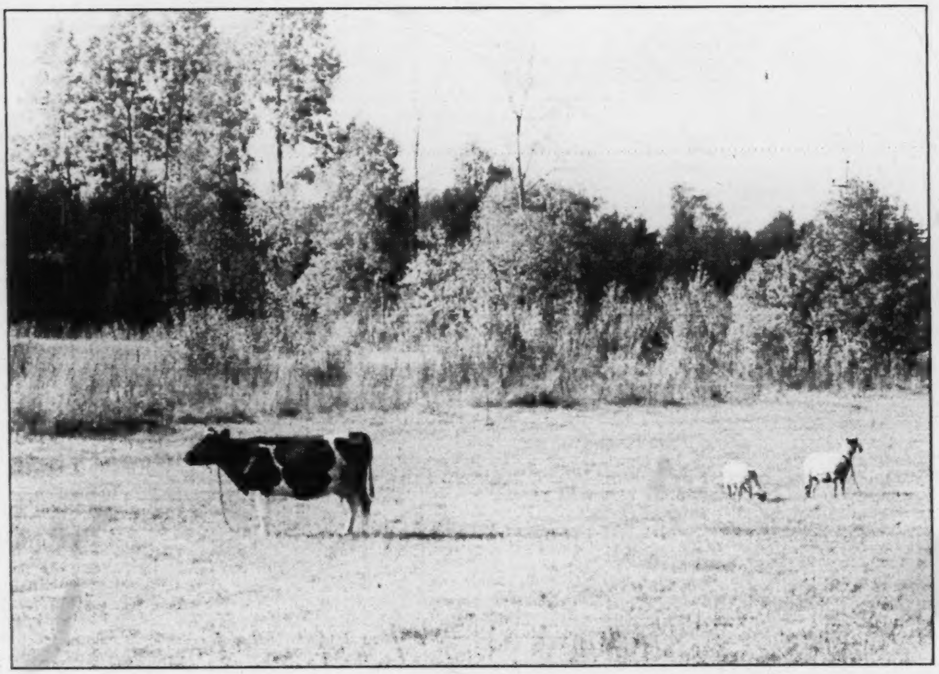

Figure 37: Cow and Sheep, Narva Countryside

did survive were laying-off thousands of workers, mainly Russian-speakers. In turn, the national government did little to encourage Narva's economic development. Without work and proper education, this would only lead to a deterioration of the working class. One journalist described the process in similar ways, stating that there was a trend for the Russian-speakers to become an underclass, the *lumpenproletariat*.

Autonomy

Given that most Russians in Narva are not willing to leave their homes, and that Estonian economic policies, according to many Russian-speakers I interviewed, do not favour the economic development of the region, one option was for the citizens of Narva to seek new arrangements within Estonia. In 1993, the city government organized a referendum (plebiscite) to define Narva's future. The citizens of the city were asked, "Do you desire that Narva have the status of national-territorial autonomous [region] within the Estonian Republic?" Territorial autonomy is a familiar concept to former residents of the Soviet Union. The Soviet State had established an entire series of autonomous regions and republics to accommodate ethnic minorities (see Slezkine, 1996 for a thorough discussion of the institutionalization of ethnoterritorial federalism in the Soviet Union). To this day, a host of autonomous republics, *okrugs* (regions), and one autonomous province remain within the Russian Federation. Returning to Narva, it should be noted that even though there were some allegations of voting

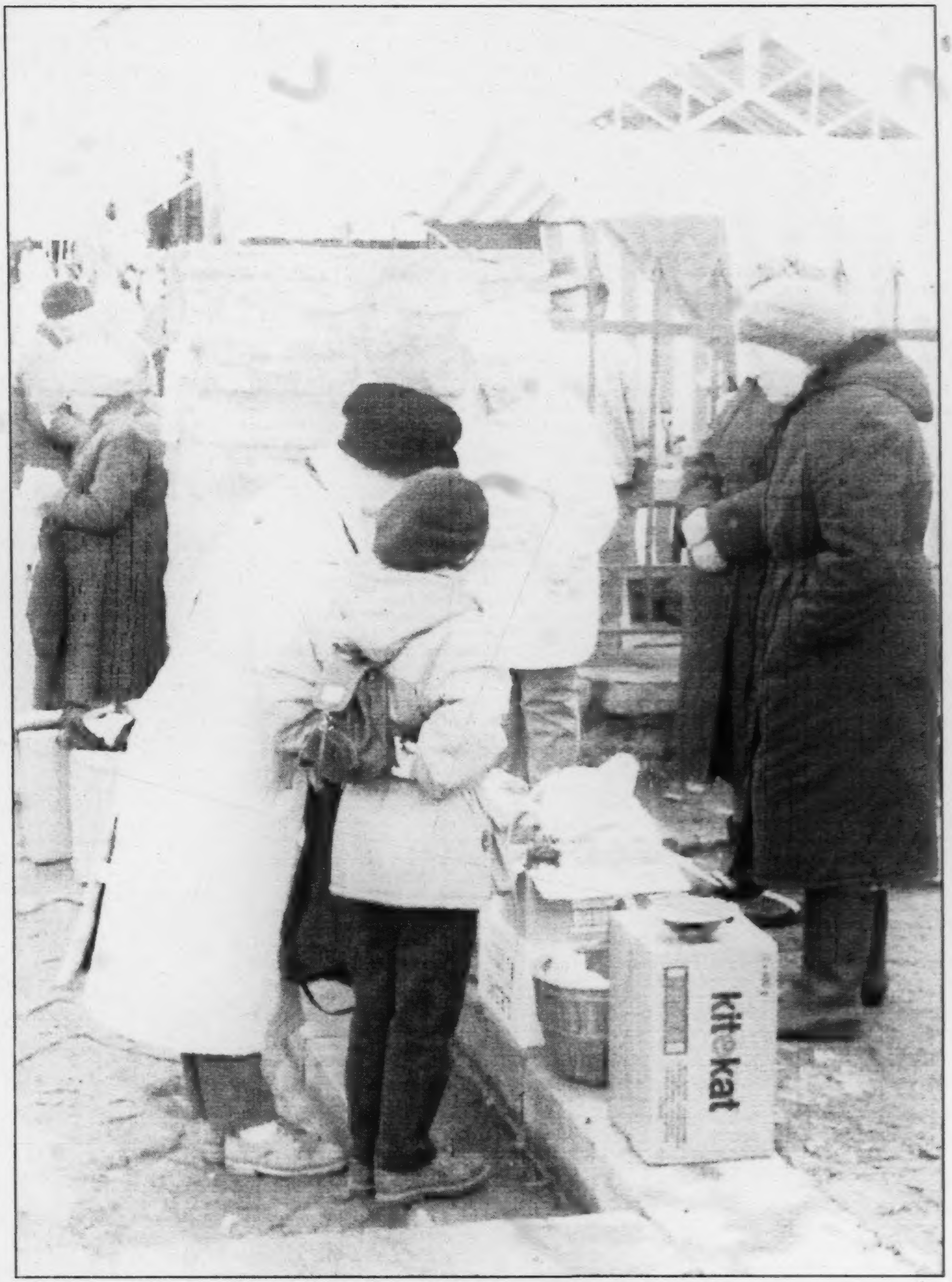

Figure 38: Open Air Market, Narva

irregularities (certain individuals voting more than once), virtually all those who had voted were in favour of this proposed autonomy of Narva. In total, 54.8% of eligible voters cast a vote, and 97.2% of these were in favor of the above question.

This referendum was organized in very uncertain times. In the spring of 1993, a new citizenship law was adopted that left most residents of Narva without any citizenship. The city council at the time alleged that the discriminatory laws adopted by the Republic of Estonia had only one aim: to force the Russians to leave the Republic so a one-nation state could be founded ("Narva: kurs na referendum" [Narva: Course to the Referendum], in *Estonia*, June 30, 1993, pp.1-2). This is not unfounded. The Baltic Times does affirm that the Estonian government had not expected so many Russians to stay in the country. Nonetheless, an additional motivating factor was the weakening economy of Narva. In 1993, the city was already reeling from high unemployment. For many, the referendum was a means of venting their dissatisfaction with the economic difficulties they faced.

One sociologist, a native Russian-speaker with whom I spoke in Narva, believed that those who organized the referendum had other motivations. He was of the opinion that the leaders of the referendum drive wanted to position themselves as intermediaries, gaining power and prestige with the new status of the city. It is evident that in the spring and summer of 1993, the mayor and city council had everything to lose. With the new laws on municipal elections, they would lose their positions. Even though the law requiring municipal officials to be citizens is not uniformly enforced, I was told that it would be enforced to ensure that certain individuals could not be elected. At the very least, the referendum was a final political gesture on the part of an outgoing city council. However, as one commentator (Rosimannus, 1993: 3) remarked, it raised more questions than it actually solved. Only a bit more than half of the eligible population voted (53%) though those that voted overwhelmingly favored national-territorial autonomy (32,885 "yes" votes versus 787 "no" votes and 114 spoiled ballots). In political terms, little was achieved with the referendum, and in the elections of the fall of 1993, a new council was elected in addition to a new mayor, an Estonian.

The referendum was a symbolic gesture, since the Estonian government had already acknowledged that it would not recognize the results of the referendum. It had already judged that the referendum was not constitutional, since there are no provisions in the Estonian constitution for such autonomous regions. This would explain in part the general voting apathy of the population. In addition, most Russian-speakers in positions of power and prestige were openly hostile to the aims of the leaders of the referendum.

In summary, most Russians I spoke to were not overly nostalgic for the Soviet Union, and they were certainly not interested in joining themselves to a Great Russia. However, they were worried about losing their jobs, and they were frustrated with the fact that they were disadvantaged when compared to ethnic Estonians. As noted earlier, the majority of my informants considered being Estonian a profession in itself. They were also interested in ensuring a bright future for themselves and their children, and were quite happy to do this within the context of an Estonian state. Even those who chose to apply for Russian citizenship did not do so because of a desire to see Narva or even Estonia integrated within the Russian Federation or a new 'Soviet Union Instead, they simply adopted the citizenship that was the most convenient. Pensioners who had little hope of learning Estonian took Russian citizenship because it did not require any language exam. One older man, a smoker, adopted Russian citizenship simply because cigarettes were cheaper on the Russian side of the Narva River, and if he had a Russian passport, he did not require a visa to go and buy his cigarettes.

What is apparent is that individuals will make choices motivated by self-interest. I noted on several occasions that in the same family there would be individuals with different citizenship. It was a common occurrence; the husband would take the Russian citizenship, and the wife would have Estonian citizenship, depending on the family's circumstances. Quite often, if one individual could learn the Estonian language with greater ease, he or she would more readily choose to take the necessary language exams and become an Estonian citizen. If an individual had to travel frequently to Russia, he or she would often choose to adopt the Russian citizenship. Certain individuals inadvertently became Russian citizens because they could not afford to wait for their passports, since even successful candidates for citizenship must wait up to one year for a passport to be issued. In the meantime, they are confined to Estonia. On the whole, most individuals I spoke to would readily become Estonian citizens if there were no

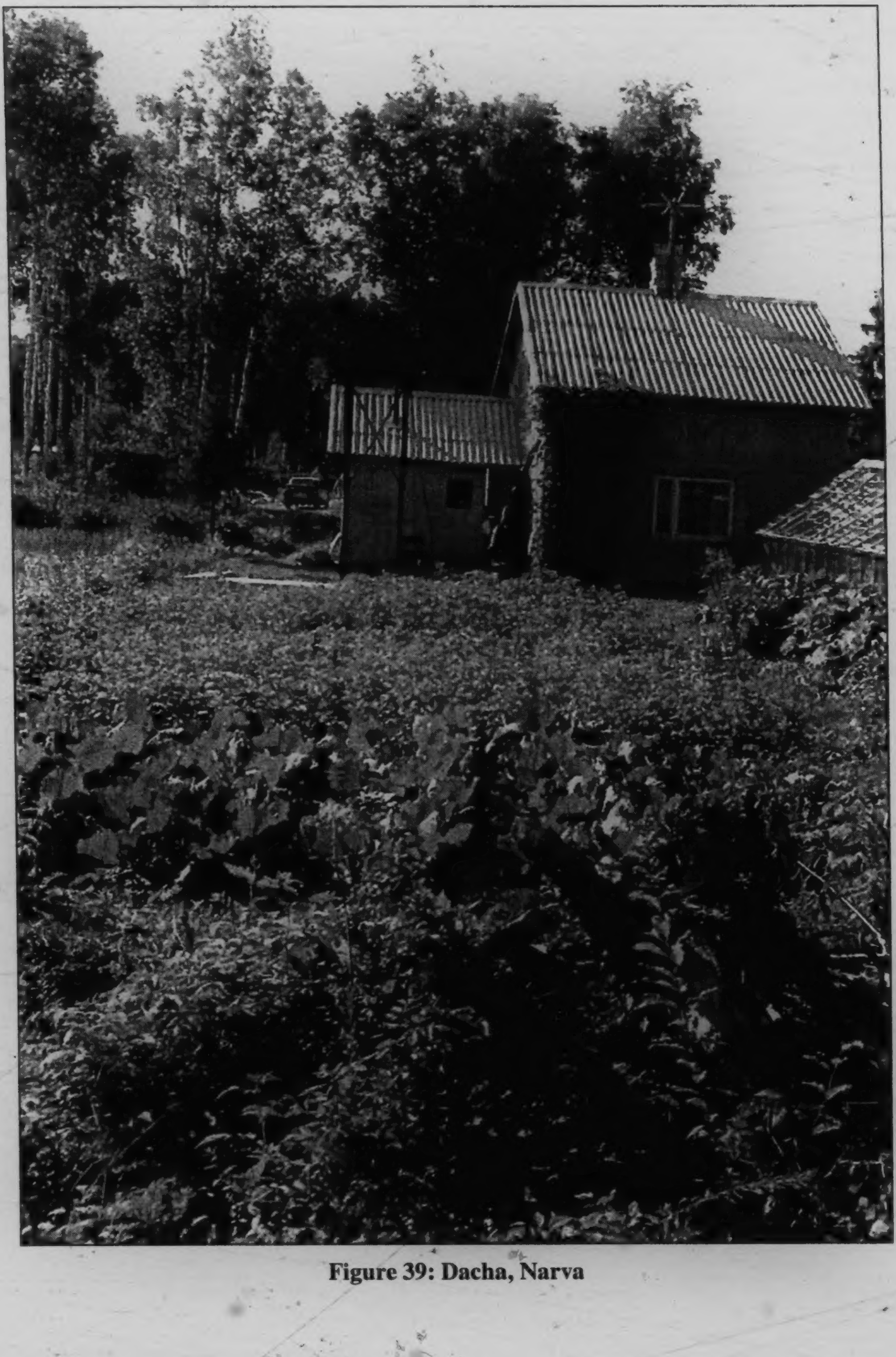

Figure 39: Dacha, Narva

language exams to be passed, and if they could retain dual citizenship with Russia.

A few Russian-speakers I conversed with believe that the Estonian government will eventually loosen its citizenship requirements. I knew several individuals who chose to take the gray passport of the non-citizens rather than apply for Russian citizenship because they are certain that eventually the Estonian government will allow all the residents of Estonia to become citizens without having to take a language exam. In one case, at least, this has proven to be true; the Estonian government has recently relaxed its citizenship requirements to grant citizenship to all children born in Estonia after 1991. However, it may take quite some time before Estonian nationalists in power consider themselves sufficiently secure to allow many older non-citizens to acquire citizenship.

It is unfortunate that the Estonian government is seen by many Russian-speakers as hostile to the Russian presence in Narva, since there is nothing that precludes a territorial form of nationalism to take hold among Russians in the Republic. Time and time again, Russians in Narva stated that they consider Estonia to be their home—their *Rodina* or their native land.. Those who were born and raised in Estonia consider the Russian Republic to be quite foreign. The majority of Russians to whom I spoke wished they could speak some Estonian or that their children would learn Estonian. However, at no time did anyone tell me that they would willingly assimilate into the Estonian language and culture. They are quite open to learning other languages, but they do not necessarily share the Estonian ideal of a 'normal' state.

The term Russian-speaker is used, quite viously, to describe those who speak Russian. It is comparable to the use of the French term 'francophone' in Québec and elsewhere in Canada; the term refers to all those who speak French regardless of their ethnicity or background. The same holds for the use of Russian-speaker in Narva and Estonia; it includes all those who speak Russian and who are not Estonian. Russian-speakers include representatives of the Jewish association I interviewed in Narva; a woman who considers herself German and hopes to immigrate to Russia; and even the proud Moldavian who invited me over for lunch and spent much time talking to me about Moldavia, its history, and its culture. All of these individuals are considered Russian-speakers, yet they do not consider themselves Russian. They do, however, share certain grievances with ethnic Russians, as most lack Estonian citizenship, and virtually all Russian-speakers were schooled in Russian and speak little or no Estonian.

Much of the resentment that is felt by Russian-speakers can be attributed to the fact that Russian-speakers in Estonia during Soviet times fared better in certain ways than they do at the present. Their access to Russian schools was guaranteed. Everywhere a Russian child happened to live in the Soviet Union, there was a Russian school. No other nationality had such privileges. There were no Ukrainian schools, for example, outside of Ukraine, even though they represented the largest minority in the Russian Federation and elsewhere in the

Soviet Union. Likewise, there were no Tatar schools in Moscow, though the city has a large Tatar-speaking minority. Ukrainians and others invariably chose to learn Russian as opposed to the local indigenous language when they were located outside of their titular republic. That is why, for example, that most of the non-Russian ethnic groups in Narva speak Russian as their primary language. It was easier to learn Russian than Estonian, and it would have been very difficult to maintain a high degree of fluency in a language other than Russian. For this reason, many of the other ethnic groups in Narva face the same difficulties as ethnic Russians, since they too have much difficulty learning Estonian.

The Estonian language was taught in Russian schools in Estonia, but as one young man, a Russian programmer from Tallinn, explained, learning Estonian was never a priority for most students, and so they never paid much attention during class time. As a consequence of this apathy, many graduating students from Russian schools still cannot speak the Estonian language fluently. This is especially the case where there are few native speakers of the language. I spoke to several recent high school graduates who still had difficulty speaking Estonian. Quite often, it was necessary to take an additional course after graduation in order to prepare for the citizenship language exam. However, language use is invariably conditioned by larger social and political contexts. In Canada, the majority of citizens who speak French and English are located in a geographic belt running through northern Ontario, down the Ottawa valley, up the St. Lawrence, and into northern New Brunswick. If we exclude those regions of the country, only a small minority of Canadians speak both languages. This was noted in Richard Joy's classic work *Languages in conflict: the Canadian experience* (1972). Also, the fact that many English-speakers in Québec are now mostly bilingual is a recent phenomenon. It was only the increasing status of the French language within Québec that led to increasing bilingualism among that province's English speakers. I do not doubt that Russian-speakers will, over time, become increasingly fluent in Estonian. Most Russian-speakers that I met wanted their children or grandchildren to learn Estonian and other languages, so there is no entrenched opposition to learning the language; quite simply, the limited use of the language in the city of Narva makes it that much more difficult for Russian-speakers to learn Estonian.

Even though Russian-speakers could perhaps live and work in other republics without learning another language, they did not necessarily receive any material benefits based on ethnicity or nationality. It was widely believed among Soviet citizens that Estonia and the other Baltic Republics had a higher standard of living than the Russian Federation. I was told by a couple on the beach that Leningraders would visit Narva and Tallinn in order to buy types of sausage that were simply not available in their home city. Ethnic Estonians had opportunities to benefit from the relative prosperity of the Estonian Soviet Republic. In this respect, the Russians and Russian-speakers in Soviet Estonia occupied a much different place in Estonian society than the French in colonial Algeria or the Afrikaners in apartheid South Africa. Estonia and other regions of the Soviet

Union were colonized, not by a specific country or nationality, but rather by a political party. Even though Russians dominated the Communist Party, non-Russians could join the party and rise in rank (e.g. Stalin). In the republics such as Estonia, titular minorities were placed in positions of power and prestige. They dominated the Communist Party in their respective regions and republics. Local officials were given relative autonomy, as long as they remained loyal to the Russian-dominated center. Again, to cite Suny, it was an odd empire in which both the colonizer and the colonized felt they were unjustly treated within the Soviet Union: certain Russian nationalists were equally disenchanted with the Soviet Union since they felt "exploited" by the peripheries (1993: 128-129).

It is this complex history that leads many Russian-speakers to reject the label of 'colonizer' even though there is some truth in the label. Older Russian-speakers, for example, remember reading flyers that were published by Estonian Soviet officials inviting them to work in the new factories being built in Narva. They were simply not aware of the fact that Estonia had been illegally annexed. Soviet propaganda had always stated that the Baltic Republics had freely joined the Soviet Union. These Russian-speakers had seen themselves as fraternal allies helping to rebuild a territory devastated by war—a territory that the Red Army had freed from the Nazis. They no more see themselves as colonizers than immigrants coming to Canada or the United States would consider themselves 'invaders.' Their actions were legal and moral according to the laws and ideology of the Soviet Union. Of course, Estonians quite legitimately can see the arrival of large numbers of Russians after the Second World War as a colonizing force that was meant to eventually submerge the indigenous population. Perhaps certain high-ranking Communist officials had formulated such a strategy, but this was never communicated to the Russian or Ukrainian factory workers in Narva, Tallinn, or any other city of the Soviet Union. These workers were told that they were building communism, not a Russian Empire.

Global forces will continue to exert pressure on all the citizens and residents of Estonia to learn a second language, though it is no longer solely the Russian language. Young Estonians are readily learning Finnish, English, or German. As the residents of a small state, many Estonians will have to learn more than one language. My friend Inna, for example, speaks some Estonian and Finnish in order to greet clients at the market. This trend is reflected in the cynical remark by one Russian man I met on the beach in Narva that I alluded to earlier: "Let the Estonians learn English, and we can use that language to communicate among ourselves."

Conclusion

The state is far from dead, and research into ethnicity and nationality must take into account the agency of the state in managing economic relations between individuals. In multi-ethnic states, various ethnicities can be seen as occupying a 'vertical mosaic,' which is to say that certain ethnic groups collectively fare much better economically than others. Rarely is the state a passive player; it will invariably promote the economic interests of certain segments to the detriment of others. Even when such policies are both necessary and justifiable – in the case, for example, of disadvantaged minorities—such efforts to promote social equality will invariably raise the rancor of some. However, when the state promotes the economic interests of a majority that is not economically or politically disadvantaged, the question arises as to how much protection a majority requires in ensuring its collective survival and well-being. The danger, as highlighted by Estonian researchers and others, is that such policies will not lead to political consolidation or social integration, but rather to social exclusion and diminishing equality.

Chapter Five

Aspects of National and Cultural Identity: Conceptualising the Russian Soul

"Une nation est une âme; un principe spirituel. Deux choses, qui, à vrai dire, n'en font qu'une, constituent cette âme, ce principe spirituel. L'une est dans le passé, l'autre dans le présent. L'une est la possession en commun d'un riche legs de souvenirs, l'autre est le consentement actuel, le désir de vivre ensemble, la volonté de faire valoir l'héritage qu'on a reçu indivis (...). Une nation est donc une grande solidarité, constituée par le sentiment des sacrifices qu'on a faits et de ce qu'on est dispose à faire encore. Elle suppose un passé, elle se résume pourtant dans un fait tangible: le consentement, le désir clairement exprimé de continuer la vie commune. Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" (Ernest Renan 1882)

Ernest Renan's lecture has been cited by numerous theorists of nationalism, using the metaphor 'a nation is a daily plebiscite' as depicting the constructed nature of nations. Yet, Renan's first observation is particularly meaningful when trying to understand Russian nationhood: the Russian soul is central to any understanding of how Russians perceive their nationality. The Russian soul implies, as Renan stated, that "a nation is a soul, a spiritual principle." Central to the Russian soul is a shared past that, Russians believe, has shaped their national character. Though it is important not to reify the Russian soul, there is nonetheless a great deal of continuity; some of the traits used to define 'Russianness' in the early 19th century were used by Russians in Narva at the end of the 20th century. In both periods, the Russian soul defined what it meant to be Russian and described the 'other,' whether Estonian, Jewish, German, or even other nations and communities. Likewise, there is a great deal of geographical continuity; the Russians of Narva described the Russian soul much like the Russians of Omsk in Siberia (Pesmen 2000). The Russian soul is nonetheless more than a 'romantic cliché'; social actors use the Russian soul to define social relations, which in turn define boundaries that demarcate nations. In Narva, the Russian soul not only defines Russianness, it defines how they differ from Estonians. The use of the term Russian soul is in an expression of solidarity—not unlike Renan's daily plebiscite—that signals belonging to a larger national community. Given that hospitality, the breaking and sharing of bread, is central to the Russian soul, this means that the nation is reproduced locally through the mundane actions of individuals interacting with others wielding symbols that define their communities.

Soul, Nation and Theory

During past several years, there have been a number of works that have theorized about nations. These writings can be lumped into a number of opposing camps: the alleged 'primordialists' versus the constructivists; the nation-as-modern versus the nation as having pre-modern roots; and nation as civic versus nation as ethnic. Peasants have perhaps been nationalized in modern times—that is to say, integrated into political communities shaped by the discourse of nationalism—but national 'constructs' are often imagined well before the peasants are actually incorporated into one nation or another. Before turning peasants into Frenchmen (and Frenchwomen), it was necessary to have a certain ideal of what being French actually meant. However, in reviewing the literature on nationalism, I have ascertained that one fundamental issue has not been addressed: how are nations greater than the sum of their members? Is a nation more than a collection of individuals? As the above citation from Renan indicates, this is a question that guided early sociologists, and I believe it is still relevant. It is not sufficient to imagine the community; it has to be baptized—to be given a soul or spirit, an element of the divine. This soul in the Russian context is significant as it is tied to the idea of national character. As I will examine, the idea of national souls was present in the discourse of the Russian peasantry in the early 19th century, and such ideas were introduced into Russian literature and influence the writings of Dostoevsky. Such ideas of national soul and character are more than just literary devices; they are meaningful to anthropology as the belief in this form of collective soul guides the actions of humans and they are used by agents in defining both their community and shaping relations with those of 'other' nationalities.

Soul and Agency

Andrew Thompson (2001) provides a useful framework to understand the Russian Soul. Citing Norbert Elias' *The Germans* (1996) and Elias' analysis of the sociological phenomenon of 'national habitus' or character, Thompson states he is "concerned with exploring how notions of nation and national identity are used by people to position themselves in relation to others and how, in turn, such social action is partly responsible for the ongoing perpetuation of the reality of the nation" (2001: 20). He recognizes that the category of nation is an essential tool for people as they make sense of the world they encounter (Thompson 2001: 21). Thompson's research is particularly meaningful to anthropological enquiry as it addresses the 'how' of national identity as opposed to the 'why.' He uses a phenomenological and ethnomethodological approach to emphasize the practical aspects of the reproduction of nations and national identities. He says, "I argue that a sociological approach must address how individuals *actively* employ their 'common stock of knowledge' about nations and national identities" (Thompson 2001: 21).

Ideas of nation and nationality are important as they shape the agency of social actors. This is particularly important in a contested zone such as Estonia; ideas of national character and national soul take on particular meaning in communities in conflict (overt and covert), and such ideas are used by social actors to understand the larger social world thus guidings their actions. Finally, Thompson's approach is amenable to an anthropological study as he examines how ideas of nation and nationality must be understood locally; "Individuals are not, for most of the time, conscious of the outcomes of their actions, but the significance of their work is that they nevertheless illustrate how order is *locally* produced, i.e. by individuals involved in a given context" (2001: 21). This corresponds to the approach I have taken in my research: I examined how individuals take taken-for-granted assumptions and then actively employ these ideas in their understanding of their social world, and as they position themselves vis-à-vis other communities (notably the Estonians) and government policies. Ideas of nationality are articulated in the practice of remembering the dead of the Great Patriotic War and also provide local meaning to the economic and legal policies of the Estonian state that are seen as disadvantaging Russians. In this chapter, I will examine how local understanding of the Russian soul shapes how Russians (and others) understand their world and how this shapes both their thoughts and actions.

In a recent monograph, Dale Pesmen examines the metaphysics of the Russian soul, providing a thorough and detailed account of the ways in which Russian speakers use the term soul in everyday speech. Though the Russian soul can be seen as a 'romantic cliché,' Pesmen's work does indicate that it can be used in the agency of individuals as they negotiate their understanding of the larger social and cultural universe. He claims that "Soul seemed to be a vital, changing repertoire of options and practices that evoked and mediated actions, interpretations, and change, at least during the early 1990s" (2000: 6). Though Pesmen asserts that the soul is not a 'thing,' she examines how the Russian soul was invoked by Russians living in Omsk in various social situations and notes how the Russian soul "was used to create, manipulate, and exploit cultural capital, during the course of which 'it' was itself modified" (2000: 8-9). Described in terms of a fiction or a nationalist trope, Pesmen sees the soul as shaping the behaviour of social actors: "It is also ways in which people did things and what they did" (2000: 12).

There are of course many striking similarities between the Russian soul as described in the Siberian city of Omsk and what I heard in Narva. However, though there were other nationalities in Omsk, the belonging of Russians is not contested. The city of Omsk is located in Siberia and is predominantly Russian (slightly more than 80% of the population). The Russians in Omsk are not portrayed as 'colonizers' and—as a majority— do not face the same challenges as a minority. This is an important distinction, as issues of soul are not required to understand a significant 'other,' as is the case in Narva. Instead, Pesmen states, "*Dusha* [soul] is still conceived of such that Russian *dusha* makes sense but, for example, Jewish soul, Turkish soul, Tatar soul, and Ukrainian soul usually do not sound right to Russians" (2000: 14). This is not the case in Estonia, where the Estonians are also attributed a soul, as I will examine. It would be useful to study questions of national character in those territories where the Russian presence is contested—the Sakha Republic and Bashkortostan immediately come to mind—as there would be more parallels with the Russians in Narva, and by extension Estonia, than is the case in Omsk. Nonetheless, the striking parallels in the definition of the national soul in both Omsk and Narva attest to the power of this form of 'national habitus' in defining the Russian nation.

Narratives of Russian Soul

The trope of the Russian soul is omnipresent. I did not meet one informant who failed to sketch the primary traits associated with the Russian soul: kind-heartedness, hospitality, and cordiality.[44] In order to appreciate fully the Russian soul, I have provided below some excerpts from interviews that describe the national soul and its significance in the lives of everyday Russians:

> "The Russian nation, it is the breadth of the soul. [The soul] is kindness and the desire not to bother anyone." (Middle-aged man, prominent union organizer)
>
> "The Russian soul. It is a wide soul, a wide open soul that forgives everything." (a woman, worker, approximately 50 years in age)
>
> "The Russian soul loves freedom, is kind-hearted, open." (19 year old woman)
>
> "The breadth of the soul. That is a deep faith." (Young Russian Orthodox priest in Narva)

The theme of the vastness of the Russian soul recurs time and time again. The Russian word used—*shiroka*—signifies not only breadth and vastness, but also possesses connotations of grandeur. The woman cited above specifies that the breadth of the soul is tied to the size of the country. A large country, the vastness of the Russians lands, gave the Russians their wide-open souls.

Another recurring theme was that Russians are intrinsically kind and good because of their Russian soul. Their major fault lies in the extremism to which their souls lead them. They are at times over-emotional due to their Russian soul:

---

[44] I asked informants about the Russian soul as one of my interview questions. However, in the course of the interview, informants would invariably refer to the Russian soul even before the question was asked.

> "The Russian people are open, perhaps too wide open and outspoken, unconcealed. The Russian people are not aggressive, always kind-hearted [or 'kind-souled' for a more literal translation], peace-loving and hospitable." (Factory manager, woman, approximately 45 years in age)

> "The Russian soul excels in its cordiality, affability, but at the same time the negative aspect is that it also signifies bungling and drunkenness, especially in the countryside." (young woman, 22 years of age)

> "Russians [are] drunken, idlers [playboys]. [The Russian Soul] signifies Russians playing the accordion. Russians driving Mercedes 500s. Russians are emotional. Russians also like spending money." (man, factory worker, 20 years)

We see here a common theme that runs throughout the popular narratives of Russian character. Though the Russian soul is positive in that it means that Russians are kind and peace loving, it also brings about other traits that are not quite as positive, such as laziness, drunkenness, and frivolity. The Russian soul and the Russian people are rarely, if ever, presented as aggressive; in fact, the only time that it was presented in such a way was using the metaphor of the Russian bear. One of my informants, an employee for the Union of Russian Citizens, said that Russians, like the bear, can patiently endure many torments. However, the Russian bear will fight back viciously if it feels that it is threatened.

The propensity for living for the moment and not saving any money was also explained in terms of the Russian soul. According to one young woman in her early twenties, this trait could be traced back to the Cossacks. Organized as military units on the borders of the Russian Empire, the Cossacks would never

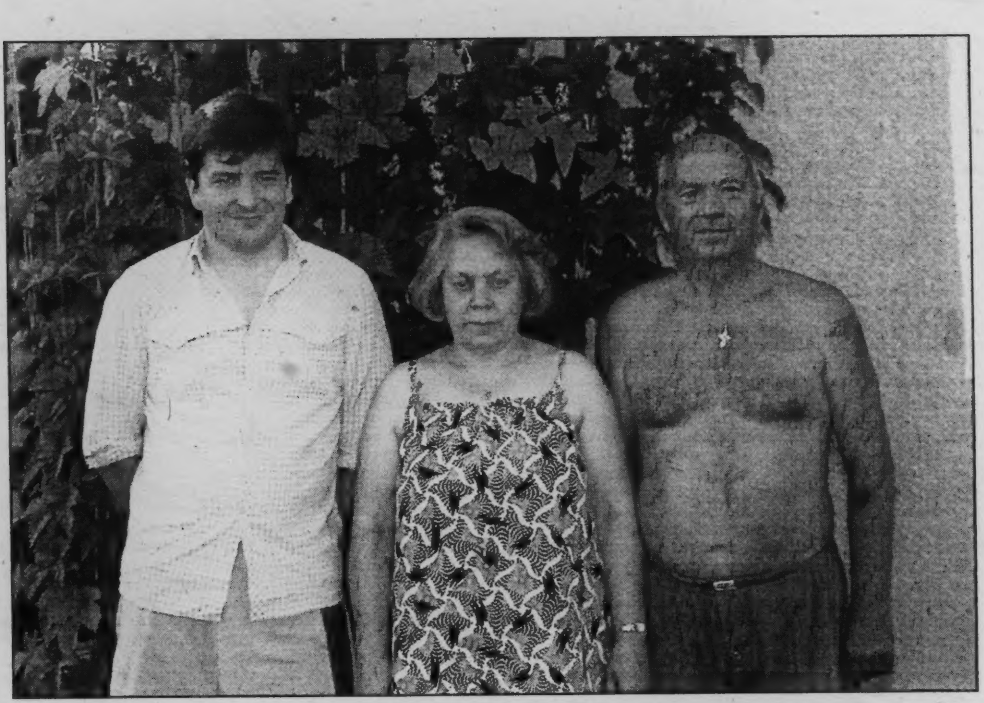

Figure 40: Hospitality at the Dacha, Narva

know when they might be killed. As a consequence, they developed the ethos of living for the moment. The young woman then explained that this ethos has imbued Russians with a penchant for living well when they have the money and thus squandering what they have rather than saving it for the future. Though her account is not historically accurate, it does provide an interesting attempt as to how an individual can use their understanding of history to provide an explanation of to the origins of one element of the Russian national character.

Another trait that is attributed to the Russian soul is hospitality. This trait forms a triad with openness/breadth and kindness as the defining features of the Russian soul and, by extension, the Russian people:

> "The Russian soul is open, kind, hospitable. It is bread and salt. Bread and salt is more than a tradition. It comes from the inside." (woman, 43 years in age)
>
> "The Russian soul—hospitality, bread and salt." (young woman, early 20s)

The bread and salt refers to a particular tradition associated with Russians and other Slavic populations in Eastern Europe. When guests arrive, to demonstrate that they are welcome and honoured, the host (usually a woman) greets the visitors carrying a loaf of bread with a small bowl of salt on top of the loaf. It is a symbol of hospitality. I have seen such displays in official ceremonies in which the Ukrainian government greeted a visiting delegation through the intermediary of a woman dressed in a traditional dress holding an elaborate loaf of bread and some salt. This term has been in use for centuries; "bread and salt" is cited in the proverbs collected by Vladimir Dahl among the Russian peasantry in the first half of the 19th century, proverbs that I will examine later in this chapter.

Hospitality is not only a currently recurring motif used to describe the Russian soul; it is likewise used to distinguish Russians from Estonians (and presumably in other contexts from other nationalities). One middle-aged woman who was born in Narva explains this differentiation:

> The Russian soul is very broad and more hospitable. Estonians are also hospitable, but by the standards of their culture they will consider it enough to pay attention to the guest and offer some coffee. The Russian soul considers that if you happen to come that a rich table [full of food] is required, even if you just happened to drop by you must leave full. In conversation, Estonians are much more calm, which the Russian soul is more emotional.

The woman speaking grew up in Narva prior to World War II, when the majority in Narva was Estonian. Yet she is quite consistent with other Russians in her definition of the Russian soul and how it distinguishes Russian from Estonians and others.

The equation of the Russian soul with hospitality was clearly described by Pesmen (2000) in her chapter "Like the Trojan Horse's Gut: Hospitality and Nationalism." In Omsk, as in Narva, the Russian soul was described in similar ways; the Russians in Omsk refer to the generosity of Russians, the 'wide' or 'vast' nature of the Russian soul, and how Russians are willing to give *everything* (see Pesmen 2000: 150-153). Though Pesmen does examine in depth the ways in which the soul is used to define Russians as opposed to other groups, she also provides a few tantalizing examples that parallel the ways in which the Russian soul can be used to define Russians as they interact with other groups. Whereas the Russian soul is characterized by generosity, Ukrainians were alleged to be greedy and stingy. This came through in the various Ukrainian or '*Khokhol*' jokes in circulation, where the thrust of the humour was the lack of generosity of Ukrainians. Not only were these jokes in circulation, but, interestingly enough, these jokes were repeated by Ukrainians. According to Pesmen, "Ukrainian ethnics told *Khokhol* jokes, remarking that Russians really *were* more generous" (2000: 155). The interaction of the groups using the symbols of soul served to define and maintain differences, and—using Frederik Barth's terminology—they were used in everyday social interactions to maintain "boundaries." According to Pesmen, "Telling stingy *Khokhol* jokes, ethnic Ukrainians had recourse to their Siberian 'Russianness'" (2000: 155). As is the case in Narva and Estonia, ideas of national character (or soul) were used to maintain boundaries between Russians and other groups. Pesmen notes that the Central Asians were depicted as "disrespectful and thieving," but were also seen as "supremely hospitable" (2000: 155).

Pesmen states that the use of soul for other nationalities did not "sound right to Russians;" however, in her description of the uses of soul in defining groups, she notes that "Although soul's nationalism is evident when one hears unaccustomed pairings such as 'Tatar *dusha*,' *any* person may be deemed ensouled. In contexts such as this interview question, terms such as Tatar *dusha* are legitimate" (2000: 156). As noted, in Narva, the use of pairings such as 'Estonian soul' are more common, and this is likely due to the different social and political contexts that distinguish Narva and Omsk: in the first, the Russians are located in a state that is perceived as hostile to the interests of Russians, whereas Omsk is a Russian city in the Russian Federation dominated by ethnic Russians with Ukrainians, Tatars, and other nationalities being small minorities. Nonetheless, there are similarities; both groups of Russians define nations in terms of souls, and the nation is maintained in everyday actions and conversation through symbolic interaction using the Russian soul to define both Russianness and the 'other.'

In Narva, the Russian soul can be distinguished from other national souls. Certain informants, for example, used the concept of soul in order to distinguish Russians and Estonians:

> "The Russian soul, it is open, benevolent, forgives everything, inside a Russian there is great religiosity. The Estonian soul is sad, closed." (a woman, 45 years, local principal in a Russian school)

> "Russians live for the present. For example, today they work, tomorrow they get paid and then they go out on the town and spend all their money. From this we can understand the open, kind, but sometimes foolish soul. Estonians are more reserved, modest. They can't openly insult you, but they can be spiteful [vengeful]. Russians are open, Estonians are closed." (an

> elderly Estonian pensioner, a woman who had lived most of her adult life in Narva).

This final statement is particularly important, as it hints at how the idea of soul can be used to shape the agency of individuals; this particular individual understands the behaviour of Estonians with whom she interacts based on her understanding of difference of national soul and character. The soul is used to metaphorically explain the attributed differences that distinguish Russians from Estonians. Where Russians are invariably described as being emotional, Estonians are more aloof, distant, and reserved. The actions of Russians and Estonians will be understood (and explained) based on folk taxonomies of national characters.

The mundane nature of the Russian soul was underlined by a woman I interviewed. She was surprised as to my interest in the existence of the Russian national soul:

> The Russian soul for me is an ordinary thing. And for you it is something unusual? I consider that Russians are very open, and we don't have any reservations. Maybe we are even too open and outspoken. I consider that in any case [Russians] are not aggressive and are always on the whole our disposition to people is kind-hearted [kind-souled], peaceful. I consider, that [Russians] are very hospitable people. These are my personal observations as I see it in daily life. Fundamentally, I consider that it is the open nature of the Russian person. To the point, sometimes this openness, maybe, bothers him, but it is easier to conduct business with such a person because they are open and you know what to expect.

This person cites the standard characteristics of the national soul: openness and kind-heartedness. What is intriguing is the reference to how it is easier to do business with fellow Russians. Ideas of soul are important because they shape expectations; individuals are expected to conform to a conduct that is appropriate to their soul.

Estonians are considered different as their national souls and characters differ substantially from Russians. According to one man from Narva in his fifties:

> Narva is different from other cities in Estonia because of its mentality. This is due to the fact that it is an Estonian city with a Russian population. And Russians differ from Estonians in their mentality, even their reactions for example. Estonians slowly, calmly solve many of their problems. Russians are very different. They are more open, more emotional as they solve their problems. This occurs not only at the individual level, but also at the level of a population group. Even though this is an Estonian city, everybody understands this. Russians will never be made into Estonians, and vice versa.

> For me, the language in which a person feels, talks, thinks, the language in which he feels his mentality, knows who he is, determines nationality. Nationality, simply put, is the language of communication, the language of thought, and the language of culture, in which he apprehends. I can't for example fully comprehend Estonian literature, in its subtlety, because I do not know the national foundations of peasant life. An Estonian, he will feel it in his soul, and I won't feel anything. However, when I read the Russian or Soviet classics, or watch a [Russian] film, I feel an emotional spirituality. Namely in my soul, certainly, I am Russian.

In the citation above, it is clear that Russians and Estonians are seen as different and that the collective behaviour expected of Russians is different from what would be expected of Estonians. At the end, it is clear how ideas of soul shape the definition of nationality; though he begins with a linguistic definition of nationality—one dependant on the language spoken—he ends by equating nationality and soul; he is Russian because of soul as opposed to a simple question of language.

Occasionally, the Russian soul was tied to religiosity and quite often described in mystical terms:

> Take for example my relatives [living elsewhere] in Estonia, that know the positive side of Russians, they say on this topic [the Russian soul] that it is breadth, that Russians always lived on a large territory, that it is openness, the desire to do good and the ability to always forgive enemies. Therefore, [even when] Russians are beaten, they remember no hate. That is the Russian soul. And, on the inside, [Russians have] a very high level of religiosity. You know, an academic research institute conducted a very interesting study on Russians. For example, the deepest atheists, those that consider themselves atheists, the tests conducted discovered that deep down they are very religious. A Swede told me that he was with his wife in Jerusalem, and he was standing with a Danish and Swedish group at the tomb of the Lord, and he said that they were calmly listening, but that Russian pilgrims were standing, sobbing, simply sobbing.

A similar description of the Russian soul was given to me by a local Russian Orthodox priest. Clearly, the depth of the Russian soul is equated with a deep religiosity.

One of the earlier cited informants also affirmed the existence of an Estonian soul, which she described as follows:

> The Russian soul differs from the Estonian. Take as an example my relatives and in general my contacts with the Estonian intelligentsia, the elite; these people do not permit anyone near them. They are a very poetic introverted people by nature. They are likely even closer to nature than Russians. They have a similar association, connection to nature, an interior predisposition. And these people have a very sad interior. They have a very sad soul, maybe due to the fact that there were such natural conditions [and]

> that Germans ruled them for 700 years and they had to survive this and so forth. An Estonian will think a great deal, will think of himself, his attitude, and therefore he is very closed. At the same time, they are a very interesting people. It is a real pleasure for me to talk with them. The Estonian soul has a similar importance as the Russian soul.

It was common for Russians to explain the Estonian soul in terms of their past—as oppressed peasants living in isolated farmsteads and dominated by Baltic German nobility. One young Russian woman describes the difference between Estonians and Russians in stating, "The great Russian nation is for me a very big abstraction. Its history is great and its culture is a legacy. Estonians don't have such a great legacy and even in the national epic they are imposed upon by other nations and this was not even in the historical period. If Estonians were often under the rule of others, then it is clear that this power influenced Estonian traditions in their country." There were a few Russians who went so far as to denigrate the Estonians due to their collective past. One extreme case was an individual who described the Estonians as parasites who were naturally lazy. However, this was an exception and not representative of the majority of Russians I met in Narva.

Not only are there Russian and Estonian souls, but the two types are defined in terms of binary opposites: the Russian soul is open, the Estonian closed; the Russian soul is emotional, while the Estonian soul is distant; the Russian soul is spontaneous, while the Estonian is reserved. Through the agency of social actors, individuals were classified in national terms, and the nation was mediated by the 'national habitus.' The symbol of soul was used to define individuals and their relation to a larger community, the nation. Individuals call upon the idea of soul to define their identity and to give meaning to their actions. As one Estonian explains, "Russian people often kiss when they meet. And for Estonians in their culture this is considered very intimate and when Estonian meet they never kiss. It is such a small difference that both Russians and Estonians must know because for Estonians [kissing when meeting] is considered unpleasant." Behaviour, then, is interpreted in terms of soul, and minor differences are used to define boundaries. It is the agency of individuals in Narva that is played out on a daily basis that serves to define national differences, and ultimately the nation, as Thompson (2001) highlighted.

Estonians in Narva likewise define Russians (and themselves) in terms of soul. This was clearly evident in the narrative of one elderly Estonian woman who describes the Russian soul using the same conceptual frameworks as Russians themselves use to understand their own identity:

> Russians on the whole are a very kind people, a people who never did anything bad to anyone else. I know that the Russian people is willing to give all that they have. I, for example, won't give away everything that I own, as I have to ensure that my children will be dressed and fed. I won't have any guests unless I can greet them as I want. And, if a Russian doesn't have anything, he will run to the neighbor to ask for something so he can have a guest over. Excuse me, but there are no such fools as Russians. They are too kind. You can't be that kind. And where did they end up with all their kindness? Nowhere! They live even worse than we do.

> [She explains how some relatives from Tallinn came to Narva with children, and that their children were afraid to go outside because they might encounter Russian children. She was surprised.] I understand that it is necessary to raise children in the spirit of one's nation but you can't humiliate others. ... Russian children are normal children and they behave normally, dress normally, active, good children.
>
> Each nation has its culture. Estonians are more reserved, modest. I do not know why this is, either our blood is colder or we are raised differently. Everything is passed down from our parents. Russians live for the day. For example, today he will work, tomorrow he will receive some money, and then he will go out on the town. Our people aren't like that, maybe because the conditions are different, no [Estonians] are more modest, closed off, not open to being wounded, lest malice harm our soul. Of course Russian nature is vast, kind and give kindness, but sometimes foolishness seizes them even more. They are a [bigger nation] so it is more visible.

She explains the difference in terms of religion; the Estonian Lutheran faith would, in her opinion, have strictly imposed modesty, whereas the Russian Orthodoxy would have seen churches as a form of theatre.

As this previous case demonstrates, both Russians and Estonians in Narva use the same terms to describe the Russian 'national habitus' quite consistently. Interestingly, the Russian soul is described in both positive and negative terms. According to a Russian history teacher in her forties, "Russians often talk without thinking. They can tolerate something to their breaking point, but in a moment they can break loose and then nothing will stop them. It is possible to understand Russians by their simplicity." The Russian soul is often described as not being aggressive, coinciding with the narratives examined in the previous chapter. As we have seen, the

Russian actions in World War II are portrayed as a defense against an invading army and the aggression of the Soviet Red Army is overlooked in Russian memorials and museums. This can be explained in terms of the Russian soul; it would be discordant to describe an overt act of aggression, as this would run counter to the widely accepted belief that the Russian soul is kind, gentle, patient, and non-aggressive in nature.

In conclusion to this examination of the view of the Russian soul in Narva, I will provide one further interview excerpt: that of a young man, in his twenties of mixed background (Estonian, Polish, and Russian ancestry). He works in a factory, lives in Narva, and has no intention of leaving his city:

> Russian in my understanding means a whole lot. I do not even know how to explain it. It is very broad in its meaning, it is everything. For example, Russians are kind and you have Russian drunkards, Russians are cheerful, like to go out, playing on the [Russian] accordion, new Russians with their [model] 600 Mercedes. There is a lot connected to the term Russian. Russians like to go out because our soul is like that. But, I do not think that only Russians spend money foolishly, I think all people spend money. It is simply that Russians are maybe just over emotional, and because they are emotional it happens that they spend all their money, in such a way that is unlike other people.
>
> The Russian soul can't be explained [that easily] in two or three words. A part of the Russian soul I have within me, even the largest part of my soul. I even consider myself a Russian person, and not Estonian. If I have Estonian citizenship, it is only so that I can live a bit easier in Estonia. I entirely do not consider myself Estonian. Russian. I am Russian.
>
> Narva is a Russian city, because a majority of Russian-speakers live here. There was in Narva a Russian history. Narva was never a pure Estonian city: first it was Swedish, then Danish, then German.

> Therefore, when Estonians cry out that [ethnic] Russians are occupiers, let us live in peace, because all our lives we wanted to live in freedom. They are free and they never lived such [in the past]. What distinguishes the Estonians is that they are *hutors*, pure *hutors* [*hutors* = peasant/farmers that lived in homesteads under the domination of a German and German-speaking nobility]. In the cities, of course, there was never any pureblood Estonians, who were considered to be those who had a hutor [farm] their own cultivated land [and] tractor.

In this passage, the basics of nationality are easily discernible. Nationality is understood in terms of blood and soul. Even though this person is not a 'pure-blooded' Russian, he considers himself Russian because of the Russian soul within him. Though this individual took Estonian citizenship in order to remain there, he nonetheless has no intention of forsaking his Russian identity and he continues to see the city as Russian because of the predominance of the Russian-speaking population. He also uses history in order to counter Estonian claims on the city; as cities such as Narva were never purely Estonian in the past, Estonian claims in the present are rendered illegitimate. Though there are subtle differences from one individual to another, this perspective effectively summarizes the dominant discourse among Russians and others in Narva; Russians see no reason as to why they should abandon their home, their city, as the Estonian state—often seen as desiring a mono-national population—cannot rightfully claim that the city should be Estonian, as this city was never truly Estonian in the past. This individual and others never wanted Narva to become a part of the Russian Federation—they were content to remain in Estonia, learn the language and become citizens—but this does not imply that their sense of nationhood is any less meaningful.

Vladimir Dahl and the History of the Russian Soul

A few researchers in addition to Pesmen have studied the history of the Russian soul in Russian literature. According to Pesmen, "Those historians who care seem to agree that the image of a mysterious, enigmatic Russian soul was, by the mid-nineteenth century, very important to Russian intelligentsia" (2000: 16). Robert C. Williams wrote a seminal piece on the Russian soul in 1970 entitled "THE RUSSIAN SOUL: A Study In European Thought And Non-European Nationalism." He contends that Dostoevsky's use of the Russian soul reflects "a sense of frustration which led to his loud attacks on the contemporary European scene" (Williams, 1970: 584). Williams, like most authors who have followed him (notably Peterson, 1994 and 1997, and Greenfeld, 1992) see the concept of the Russian soul as "an anti-European concept" (Williams, 1970: 584) or a protest against a dominant, universalizing discourse common to western humanism. Whereas Hegel proposed a world-historical 'spirit,' Russians put forward the concept of the Russian soul.

It is important to note that Russian people were not subjugated by the West, but rather by the Russian Empire. It should also be noted that Russian writers such as Pushkin and Dostoevsky had been exiled within the empire and

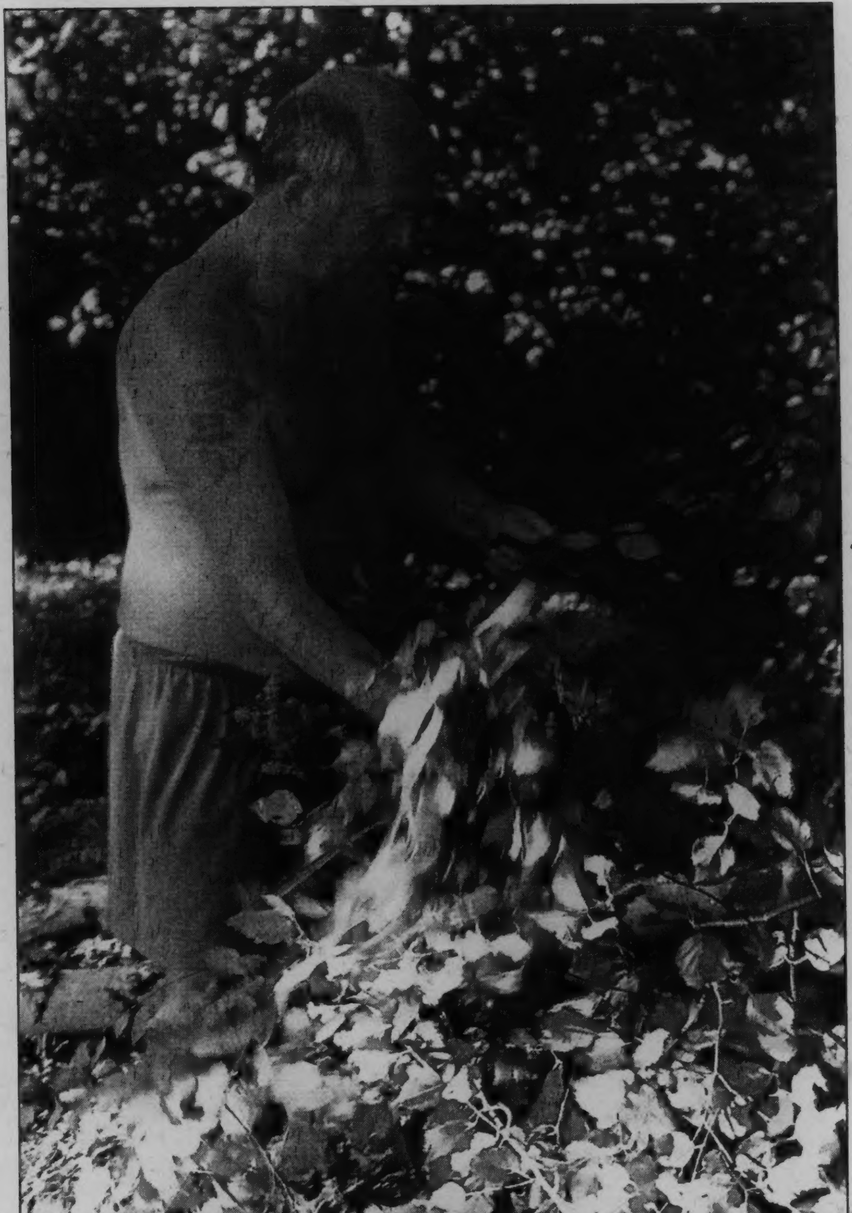

Figure 41: Preparing the “veniki” for the banya, Narva

that all Russian authors were under strict censorship. Nikolai Berdiaev, a philosopher writing after the Revolution, used the Russian Spirit to explain why the Russian people had suffered so much to found an empire they did not want. It is clear in his writings that the is not a Hegelian Europe, but rather the Russian Imperial structure.

The idea of the national soul draws upon an Orthodox Christianity that is much older than either Pushkin or Dostoevsky. Pesmen notes that older and non-intelligentsia notions of the Russian soul and Russianness are difficult to find, but she does suggest that there are links with Orthodoxy. She notes, "*Dusha* [the term] did appear occasionally in folk songs, and I must stress that there is a yawning gap in scholarship on older, non-intelligentsia and folk uses of *dusha*, so I cannot take (nor am I interested in taking) a position on any ultimate genesis of Russian soul" (2000: 17). Though I will not attempt to trace the genesis of *dusha*, there are interesting uses of the term soul in reference to nationalities that are quite revealing, as in the folk proverbs and sayings recorded in the first half of the 19th century by the ethnographer, folklorist, and linguist Vladimir Dahl (sometimes transcribed as Dal'). These proverbs reveal that the peasantry did talk in national terms at that time, and there are indications that they used ideas of soul in order to define boundaries between nationalities. There are also clear predecessors to modern narratives of soul, wherein Russians are described in terms of hospitality and kindness. I would argue that this indicates a certain continuity, and while social actors were using ideas of soul in their day-to-day agency, boundaries were being drawn and maintained between nations through the use of such symbols in the daily interactions of the 19th century Russian peasants much as they were being used in the symbolism at the end of the millennium by Russians in Narva. The comparison of the ethnographic material presented earlier in this chapter and the sayings collected by Dahl (2000) can provide new insight into the meaning of nation, nationality, and nationalism in terms of both theory and social practice.

The writings of most researchers examining Russian nationhood and nationalism are founded on the basic premise that, prior to the Revolution, the peasantry had no clear sense of nationality. This perspective is best summarized in the writings of Geoffrey Hosking, who states that “If one had asked a nineteenth-century peasant what nation he belonged to, he would probably have answered by referring to his religion, 'Orthodox' (pravoslavnyi), or by using the adjective russkii” (1998: 210). He continues by affirming that “Religious identity was what in their own eyes distinguished them from other peoples of the empire, and it was what, at least on the surface, they had in common with their own elites” (Hosking 1998: 211). If the Russian peasantry did not have a clearly defined sense of nationality prior to the Revolution, then Russian nationality would be a ‘passport’ nationality: that is to say, the Russian nationality would have been imputed by the actions of the Soviet State, notably in the recording of nationality in the internal Soviet passports.

The assertion that the peasantry prior to the Revolution had a religious rather than national identity is based on one source in Hosking's text. He cites the Russian author A.V. Buganov (1992: 83-94; 99-110 and 115-120) in his analysis of Russian history, the 19th century peasantry, and national self-consciousness (Hosking 1998: 508). The use of Buganov to substantiate the claim that the peasantry had no true sense of nationhood is somewhat misguided, as Buganov's writings tend to be subtler. He writes that the Russian Orthodox faith was a central defining element of Russian ethnicity, at times almost synonymous with Russian, but that does not mean that there was no sense of nationality. He writes, "The study of the historical understanding of Russian peasants of the 19th century is a testament to the relatively high level of national consciousness" (1992: 204). Even more interesting is the parallel Buganov draws between the very patriotic songs of the 16th to the 18th century and the traditional songs of Russian folklore. A central theme to these songs, both from the modern and the medieval period, was the need to safeguard the "native [*rodnoy*] land" or the "*Rodina*" (Buganov 1992: 161). The above factors demonstrate that even though the religion was central to the identity of the peasantry, it did not preclude a national self-consciousness.

Other primary texts also contradict this belief that the primary identity of the Russian peasantry was religious rather than national. A case in point is the work of Dahl in the 19th century (1801-1872). Only two years junior to Alexander Pushkin—Russia's national poet—Dahl spent decades doing research among the

Great Russian peasantry, collecting proverbs, sayings, and other examples of the 'living' Russian language. His two major works include a dictionary of the Russian language as spoken (*Tolkovogo slovarya jivogo velikorusskogo yazyka*) and his classic work, a collection of over 30,000 proverbs and popular sayings (*Poslovitsy russkogo naroda*). While he had finished his compilation in the 1850s, his integral work was published years later in the 1860s. Unlike other folklorists, Dahl is a reputable source because he was meticulous in his research and faithfully recorded the proverbs and sayings exactly as the peasantry used them, even when he himself did not fully understand the meanings. Dahl's work clearly indicates a national self-consciousness among the peasantry in the first half of the 19th century, as there are dozens of references to ethnic Russians and other nationalities.

The proverbs collected by Dahl attest to the continuity in both identity and the stereotypes Russians identify as central to the Russian nation. True, Russian nationhood was defined in religious terms, but in the popular proverbs the peasantry clearly understood themselves in ethnic terms. A few examples of Dahl's published proverbs and sayings clearly demonstrate this. As Dahl recorded, "The Russian [*russkii*] God is Great; The Russian Land is all under God; The Russian people/nation [*narod*] does not fear the cross it fears the stick [i.e. to be beaten by a stick]" (Dahl 2000: 233). In these saying there is a clear sense of nationality: there is a Russian people, a Russian God and the Russian land. These are all the themes that existed in the medieval literature and clearly were integrated into the Great Russian i.e. ethnic Russian, not to be confused with the Little Russian (Ukrainian) and White Russian (Belarusian) populations. There is equal reference to a collective spiritual force as one of the proverbs states: "Hmmm! There is the smell of the Russian spirit here" (Dahl 2000: 233). I would argue that this saying hints at the equation of hospitality and the Russian spirit; upon entering a Russian home, the smells of a richly prepared meal for the guest would presumably indicate the presence of Russian spirit.

The proverbs also distinguish the Russians from the major nationalities of Europe—the Germans, French, Italians, and English—and those nationalities found mainly in the Russian Empire—Tatars, Romana i.e. 'Gypsies,' Mordvinians, and of course Russian Jews. These nationalities are characterized by a variety of national characteristics in the proverbs that stereotype them as having defining traits. The proverbs state, for example, "What is healthy for a Russian will bring death to a German" (2000: 242). An authentic German was characterized in the sayings as exact, punctual, pedant, capricious. A Russian, presumably, would have been the opposite (as the traits attributed to Estonians in Narva were opposite to those attributed to Russians). Both would have differed from authentic Frenchmen, Englishmen, Swedes, and Italians, all of whom were seen as having shared national commonalities (i.e. national characters) in Russian sayings (see Dahl 2000: 242). The pejorative term *Khokhol* for Ukrainian figured in the sayings collected by Dahl; according to this record, "a *Khokhol* is more stupid than a crow but more cunning than the devil" (2000: 241). A Ukrainian could not be trusted, as "he never tells the truth" (Dahl 2000: 241). Finally, to be called a *Khokhol* meant that one was devious and stubborn (Dahl 2000: 241). Again, the proverbs clearly define populations in terms of nationality rather than religious faith.

Even more important for the purposes of this research is the way in which the concept of national soul is present in the proverbs. Western researchers have examined the emergence of the concept of the Russian soul in literature (see Peterson 1994), yet disregard the ways in which the peasantry may have defined national souls. In Dahl's collection of proverbs and sayings, the concept of national soul emerges quite clearly:

- "But the Romani ("Gypsy") soul is not filthy" (Dahl, Volume 1, 2000: 242);
- "A 'Zhidovskaya' [Jewish] soul. I would rather believe a Jew than him. He even cheats Jews (Dahl, Volume 1, 2000: 243);
- "Up to now, the Russian spirit was not as audible and not as visible as the Russian spirit which now appears to our senses" (Dahl, Volume 2, 1984: 381).

The first citation is particularly meaningful, as it illustrates the particular way in which nationhood (or *narodnost*) was understood. This popular saying is implying that a particular population was considered 'filthy'—i.e. it is displaying an ethnocentric worldview in which this particular population is despised for its look, traditions, character, etc.—but in terms their collective soul, the Romani are equal before God and therefore their souls are not 'filthy.' S.N. Artanovsky looks at this particular question in his examination of the historical formation of the different nations. He writes that the Russian Orthodox considered all [Christian] peoples equal before God and that no ethnic or racial group could be excluded from the community of believers (1994: 119). A cursive reading of Dahl's classic works thus demonstrates that the peasantry did have a clear sense of nationality, one that existed independently of religion. It is also interesting to note the concept of the national soul or spirit that is present in the proverbs and sayings.

The importance of Dahl cannot be overstated, as he had friendships with most of the major Russian authors of the 19th century, including Pushkin and Gogol. Though his works are overlooked in modern academia, he was highly regarded by contemporary critics such as Turgenev and Belinsky. It should be noted that the term 'Russian soul' appears in literature for the first time in 1842 in a literary critique Belinsky penned following Gogol's publication of *Dead Souls* in 1842 (see Williams 1970: 574). It cannot be mere coincidence that Belinsky used a concept that appears in Dahl's collection of proverbs and sayings; Dahl first published a collection of ethnographic Russian folktales in 1832, a full decade before Belinsky used the term. If these authors are not being influenced by the surrounding culture of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian peasantry, then it is quite plausible to presume that they are being influenced by Dahl's research and publications, as he was both a contemporary author and friend to many of the leading Russian authors. His work also would have influenced later generations of philosophers and writers, such as Dostoevsky.

The writings of Dahl have not been *entirely* overlooked by Western authors. Daniel Rancour-Laferriere in *The Slave Soul of Russia: Moral Masochism and the Cult of Suffering* makes extensive use of Dahl's work, yet does not include any of these obvious references to national souls (1995). Rancour-Laferriere set out to "construct a psychoanalytic model of the mentality behind both slavish behavior and its cultural signification in Russia" (1995: 4). The purpose of the work was to examine Russian masochism rather than Russian nationhood. Other authors, such as Geoffrey Hosking (1998), Liah Greenfeld (1992) and Nathaniel Knight (2000), ignore Dahl altogether, even though they do examine the origins of Russian nationhood. All of these authors see the nation as a modern construct that co-opted the peasantry at a late date in history.

The 'national habitus' persevered throughout the Soviet period; the Soviet state may have formalized nationality in the 'passports,' but this act clearly did not create nationality as we can see from the work of Dahl and others. Likewise, the national identity of Russians in Narva, a community was virtually unchanged from that of the peasantry almost two centuries prior. In Dahl's collection of proverbs, we can read that a Russian person is "a gadabout and a braggart." This Russian is also "shrewd;" however, according to the proverbs, a Russian "is driven by bread-salt" i.e. hospitality, as symbolized by the traditional salt and bread welcome. However, the same Russian "does not kid with a sword or with the *kalach*" (a white wheatmeal loaf of bread) (Dahl 2000: 233). Whereas Brubaker (1996) may see identity as a process, the historical record indicates that nationality is not simply the product of a state, but largely shaped by social actors in interaction with political and other social institutions. Over time, as Thompson (2001) describes, ideas of national identity come to form a 'national habitus'.

The Russian soul was persistently cited by Russians when defining Russian nationality. Every person I spoke to in Narva and elsewhere believed in the existence of this soul. It colours the perception of Russians. A number of characteristics kept recurring when people explained the meaning of this term. It signifies that Russians are fundamentally kind, good, hospitable, and at times irreverent. In many ways it provides meaning to the social landscape. It conditions behavior. More importantly, the Russian soul defines the Russian nationality. The belief in a soul provides the nation transcendence: the nation is more than a group of individuals in the same way that a human is more than a clump of cells, since both have been blessed with a soul (or a spirit).

To summarize, then, it is evident that a certain Russian ideal had crystallized by the end of the nineteenth century. The Russian character, soul and spirit clearly existed by the time of the Revolution. Seventy years of Communism did little, if anything, to diminish the importance of the Russian soul in defining Russian nationality. If anything, the Soviet State encouraged the continuing identification with the Russian character[45]. By the 1950s, works were being published examining the Russian character (see Losskii, 1957), and by the end of the Soviet regime, the Russian soul was present in patriotic Soviet songs. In one (of many) songs entitled "*Rossiya*" [Russia], one of the verses states, "Many times they tried to kill the Russian soul in you." The song begins with the refrain "I love you *Rossiya* [Russia], our dear Rus'." The same song then refers to "your strong soul" (Semernin 1987: 16). In a sense, the Soviets were trying to instill a sense of Soviet patriotism by calling upon the Russian soul; they were curating, not inventing nationhood.

In addition to the Russian soul often cited by Russians and others in Narva to define Russian nationality, the expression Russian character was also used to define 'Russianness,' a term which I believe is semantically linked to the widely held idea that Russians share a common national soul. Russians believe they share a common personality that affects their actions. In Narva and elsewhere in Estonia, Russians allege that they are more emotional than Estonians, who are seen as more distant, more aloof. Russians also perceive the Estonians as being more organized, and they value the order that the Estonians have imposed in the Estonian Republic. Many Russians acknowledged that they are schemers who do not enjoy too much hard work. One joke a Russian-speaker in Tallinn recounted sums up the purported character of Russians: "Two Russians meet and strike a deal. One Russian agrees to sell apples at an agreed upon price and the other agrees to buy apples at that price. After concluding their deal, the first Russian goes off in search of apples and the second goes off in search of money." The Russian speaker who recounted that joke went on to say that Estonians are more reliable than Russians in business, as they tend to keep their promises, unlike Russians.

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[45] Given that the Soviet Union was shaped by Marxist ideals and promoted atheism, the term soul was problematic. As Pesmen chronicles, other terms such as *psikhika* (psyche) and *lichnost'* (self, person, personality, individual) were promoted (2000: 18). In spite of Soviet efforts, these terms did not supplant the term soul: "It was *dusha*, at least in the early 1990s, that condensed Russianness, Russian history, and mystical, social, and philosophical notions of self, soul, identity, and personhood, interwoven with ritual and sentiment" (Pesmen 2000: 18).

These stereotypes have existed for quite a long time. To cite the writings of a turn-of-the-century British spy working in Russia, "They are lazy, undisciplined, overly talkative; they conduct themselves badly and therefore their feelings express more passion than they deserve; but, as is right, they are not spiteful; they are kind-hearted [good-souled] and not vengeful; they are generous, patient to another's failings; they are not seized with such carnal cravings as the Spanish or the French; they are sociable, passionate, but don't bear grudges" (Moem, 1998: 42). This officer continued by stating that Russians drink too much at their social gatherings. That foreigners should hold stereotypes of Russians is not surprising, since many Russians hold the same stereotypes. The tradition continues with the thousands of jokes circulating about the "New Russians" that reinforce these stereotypes about Russians in general. And, the same stereotypes can be found in the works of Dahl.

The Russians I met and interviewed in Narva defined being Russian in terms soul, spirit, and character. Russian researchers are not immune from taking the Russian character at face value. Vladimir Artamonov, in an article published in the Estonian Russian language journal *Raduga* (Rainbow), writes that the national character is a "transparent factor that runs through the centuries and distinguishes the face of peoples" (1990: 27). In the article entitled "National Character and History," Artamonov examines the ethnopsychology of the Russian people through time. In his analysis of the national character and warfare, for example, Artamonov underlines the traditional failings of the Russian soldier. He writes that Russian soldiers did not enjoy routine drilling and work, and that the greatest weakness of the soldier was his emotional nature. Unless Russian soldiers have an emotional investment in the war, Russian armies will fail miserably. Artamonov cites the catastrophic defeats in the Finno-Russian War of 1939-40 to illustrate this point. The Russian people, according to Artamonov, can only be effectively mobilized in times of great crisis and catastrophe, such as in 1812 against Napoleon and 1941 against Hitler. In order to discover the roots of this behavior, the author proceeds to do an "archaeology" (his phrasing) of the Russian ethnopsychology, and ties the national character to the national spirit. According to Artamonov, "Through the centuries nations are molded and their past spiritual accumulations determine their futures" (Artamonov, 1990: 44; my translation).

To conclude, Russians in Narva define themselves in terms of their Russian character and soul. This idea of soul provides meaning to their social interactions; individuals are expected to act in a given way, as the soul is believed to shape the character and behaviour of individuals. It also shapes interethnic relations as the Russian soul and the Russian character if often defined in opposition to Estonians. The idea of the Russian soul is not necessarily a recent phenomenon as an analysis of the work of Vladimir Dahl indicates that the Russian peasantry had defined the traits that define Russians and set these traits in opposition to those of other peoples, other nationalities. This argues for the necessity of conducting more historical analysis into the history of this particular trope. If we are to understand the origins of the idea of the Russian soul, it is best to search in religious texts and writings; the likely origins of the idea of national souls are certainly to be found in Orthodox Christianity as opposed to Russian literature. Rather than seeing the Russian soul as a modern construct, I propose that it is rooted in a much older worldview; it was curated and transmitted over the generations independently of the state, and though states may call upon the trope of the Russian soul, national identity is nonetheless understood and maintained in local communities.

Chapter Six

Aspects of Regional Identity: Graveyards and Homeland[46]

I set out on a nice sunny summer morning to visit my first graveyard. Located in the countryside, the graveyard was a world unto itself. In stark contrast to the graveyards of rural Alberta where I grew up, the graves were set among the trees that provided shade to countless benches and tables that were often laden with fruit. The graves were immaculate; not a twig or dead leaf was to be found, and the graves were clearly visited on a regular basis. In addition to the flowers, other offerings were visible near the graves: there were plates, shot glasses, pieces of food, empty bottles of vodka carefully placed under benches, and other signs of visitors and the breaking of bread. These graves were in stark contrast to the older cemeteries located in Narva, where the trees had overgrown the graves, leaving little visible. The graves themselves were rich with symbolism; a clear pattern emerged in the graves, a pattern not unlike the one I had seen at various war memorials in both Narva and Moscow. I spoke to one woman who was cleaning a grave, and she promptly gave me a tour of all the graves of deceased relatives and explained which gravesites she was responsible for keeping clean. The effort required that she visit the graveyard several times a year. The graves clearly anchored her to the city of Narva; even if she were to leave, the graves would remain. Visiting graveyards clearly affirms a sense of belonging, because the land is appropriated symbolically through the graveyard. It expresses a sense of belonging and a common consciousness that affirms belonging to the territory; it means that the land was Russian, because Russians had buried their dead in the soil.

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[46] A version of this chapter has been accepted for publication in the journal *Religion*.

The study of graveyards was an accidental undertaking. As my goal was to study concepts such as nation, nationality, and nationalism, I did not expect to study graveyards in the field. It was my interaction with Russians and others in Narva over the course of my fieldwork that led me to examine graveyards and the *habitus* of death and visits to the graveyard in greater detail. It was the reference to Narva as a Russian city because the graveyards of Russian dead were located there that highlighted the very subtle symbolic interaction that was occurring in the region. Visiting graveyards is not unique to the Russians of Narva; similar traditions exist in other Russian communities both in the Russian Federation and in the Russian Diaspora. In those regions where belonging is not put into question, these traditions approach Pierre Bourdieu's definition of doxa: "What is essential *goes without saying because it comes without saying*: the tradition is silent, not least about itself as a tradition" (1994: 163). The practice of visiting graveyards is not questioned because it is not only the right thing to do, it is the only thing to be done. However, in the contested terrain of Narva, the practice of visiting graveyards takes on new meaning as a highly symbolic act that roots individuals in their community. In essence, it is nationalism writ small that serves to mark out a specific territory—the city of Narva—as legitimately belonging to those inhabiting the city: the primarily Russian community.

The age-old tradition of 'feasting the dead' has been maintained among Russian populations for well over five centuries. Graveyards hold a special place, both in traditional Orthodox faith and in the lives of Russians (and others), in the city of Narva (Estonia). The tradition of feasting the dead three, nine, and forty days after death can be traced in an unbroken line to pre-Christian Rus'. Many details may vary, but the essence remains: the soul of the deceased must battle its way out of the body and then spend time both in Heaven and Hell. While this is occurring, the living must remember the dead, helping their souls during this period of travail. A final feast one year after the death of the individual does not end the relationship of the living and the deceased; relatives visit graves on a regular basis as a sign of respect to the dead, who are potential saints in the Russian Orthodox tradition. The presence of this 'saintly' land—Russian graves—serves to define homeland and roots the population to a new area. By examining the importance of graveyards to Russians and other Eastern Europeans, I will demonstrate that a sense of place is maintained in these rituals of daily life.

Central to the religious practices of innumerable cultures are the rites pertaining to death; the Russian people are no exception. A rich burial tradition developed over centuries combines both pagan and Christian elements. Of particular importance is the visiting of graveyards—the homes of the dead. The Soviet Union did much to destroy the religious faiths of its citizens, including Russian Orthodoxy, and churches were desecrated, if not destroyed. Despite this, certain rituals persisted, notably those rituals and practices relating to death and graveyards. The study of graveyards is important in understanding not only the survival of religious belief and its revival, but also the Russian sense of belonging, primarily among the Russian Diaspora in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Graveyards are not simply the homes of the dead; they serve to mark out the homeland of the living and legitimize the Russian occupation of territory that they define as their native land.

To understand the relevance of graves in the discourse of Russians, I examine this issue from several perspectives. I begin with a brief discussion of theory, and then review Russian Orthodox post-mortuary rituals and beliefs—both historical and contemporary practices. Of particular importance are specific days on which people gather to mark the death of an individual, and the rationale behind such gatherings. I also examine Russian Orthodox religious beliefs to seek out clues as to why graves are given such prominence among the Russian people (*russkii Narod*). Having reviewed the historical evidence on death and dying in Early Modern Russia, I will then examine graveyard-related ethnographic evidence collected in 1997 and in the summer of 2001. Contemporary accounts concerning death and dying are virtually the same as the historical accounts analyzed by Daniel Kaiser (1988). Kaiser's work was based upon historical documents dating back several centuries, and he demonstrates that these rituals described in the historical record were clearly tied to earlier pagan practices. I will then present and examine the structure of the graves themselves and various other rituals relating to graves, while examining the ways in which graves help define

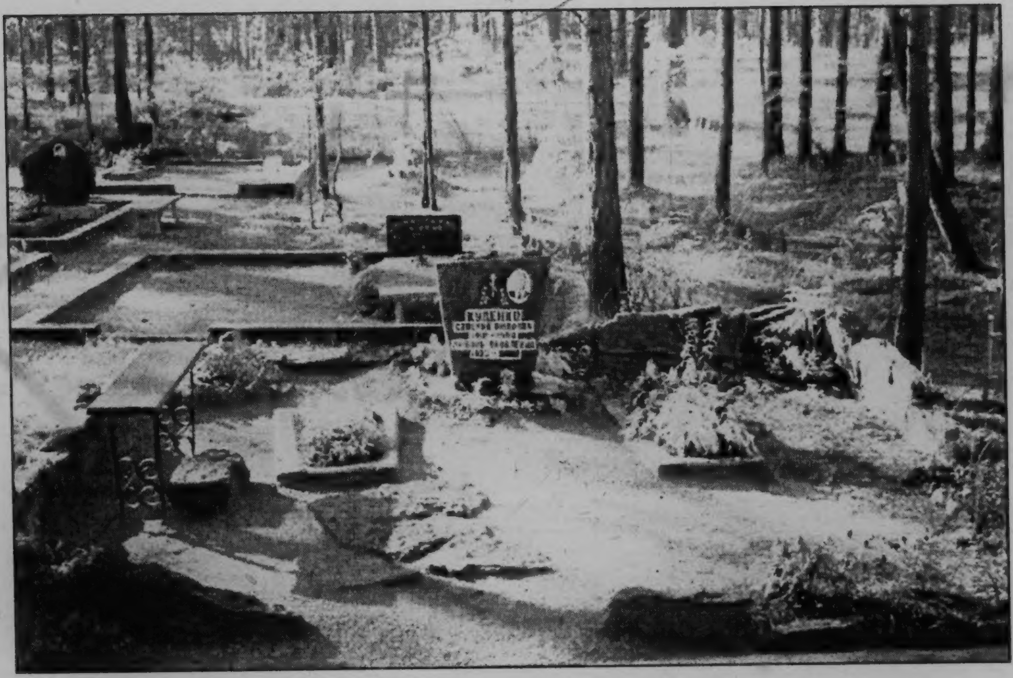

Figure 42: Russian Graves, Narva

belonging. I will also relate a set of family rituals pertaining to death as described to me in detail by a number of people I interviewed in Narva and elsewhere. Following this, I will describe a burial in Moscow that took place in the summer of 2001[47].

Theoretical Considerations

I came to Narva to study nationalism, but I was redirected through my interactions with community members towards an examination of the questions of graves. Clearly, anthropological fieldwork can provide meaningful information unlooked-for and therefore otherwise overlooked. This field research demonstrates that community remains centered on the rituals of daily life and death. The Russian community has maintained important rites of passage, and sacred ground still provides meaning to groups of individuals. More importantly, there is clear continuity with the past; rituals are maintained that unarguably tie these individuals to the land.

Beliefs relating to death and burials have existed in Russia since the Medieval Period. These characteristically mundane practices relating to death underlie Russian understanding of community, place, and belonging. The

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[47] Ideally, I would have liked to participate in the actual event at an earlier date, but such rituals only involve family members and very close friends. It would not have been appropriate for me as an anthropologist to be present under such circumstances. The burial I attended was that of an affinal relative; the father of one of my spouse's aunts. In Narva, consequently, I relied upon information gathered in interviews and various written texts, and was able to use information from Moscow to then validate these accounts.

Orthodox Church played an important role in maintaining a series of traditions relating to death and graveyards. Graveyards played no small part in defining the 'Russian land'[49] and the Russian community in Narva and elsewhere. This cannot be understood without first comprehending the old customs that constitute both religious tradition and the tradition of the peasantry, who maintained both Orthodox and folk traditions concerning the dead. At times, these older customs survive in spite of the state, though they may, on occasion, be appropriated by the state to further its own aims.

The Soviet Union was an officially atheist state, but the Communist Party never did succeed in eradicating the imprint of Russian Orthodoxy. It was much easier for the Communist Party to attack the organization of the Russian Orthodox Church than the wide range of social practices that bear the imprint of Orthodoxy (Pankhurst, 1996: 128). According to Jerry Pankhurst, "the atheist state professed by Stalin could not escape completely the formative influence of Russian Orthodoxy. Its vestiges shone through the public rituals and were clearly visible in the communist craving for political monopoly, cultural orthodoxy, and sanctimonious rigorism" (1996: 129). Pankhurst invokes Clifford Geertz's (1968) concept of "spiritual afterimages" to explain the survival of Orthodox customs in

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[49] Elsewhere, I have examined the history of the concept of the Russian land and the origins of Russian nationhood in the medieval period (Bouchard 2001 and Bouchard 2002 [in press]). Suffice it to say that the term *zemlya* or land was used in a meaning quite similar to the Latin *patria*. Already in the 14th and 15th centuries there was an emerging concept of a Russian nation inhabiting a Russian land.

Soviet society. These spiritual afterimages refer to "'reflections, reverberations, projections' of religious experiences in daily life" (Pankhurst 1996: 129). What this implies is that religious faith extends through values and beliefs into the profane experiences of daily life. The religious cannot be completely dissociated from the secular; even when the Soviet state tried to eliminate many aspects of organized religious practice, the shadow of religious belief was maintained in the daily secular activities of individuals. As Pankhurst writes, "These imperatives may lack the clarity and purpose that distinguished the original precepts, but they leave a distinct mark on successive generations, on the country's political, social, and economic practices" (Pankhurst 1996: 129). As I shall discuss in greater detail later, many of these religious rituals were transformed, becoming partly secularized. They were no longer the sole preserve of Orthodoxy, but signs of 'culture' or 'civility'.

In many ways, Soviet atheism provided for new rituals. New institutions and rites were introduced—such as secular funerals—while others, especially those that were not institutional in nature, remained essentially unchanged. Rites and rituals that occurred in the home among family and friends proved to be the most lasting. As one Soviet official, V. G. Shyuka (1966) noted, "Study of the population's religiosity shows that the religious and cultural activities that are solidly rooted in everyday life and have become family traditions are the most tenacious. Here lie the broadest channels for the penetration of religious ideology

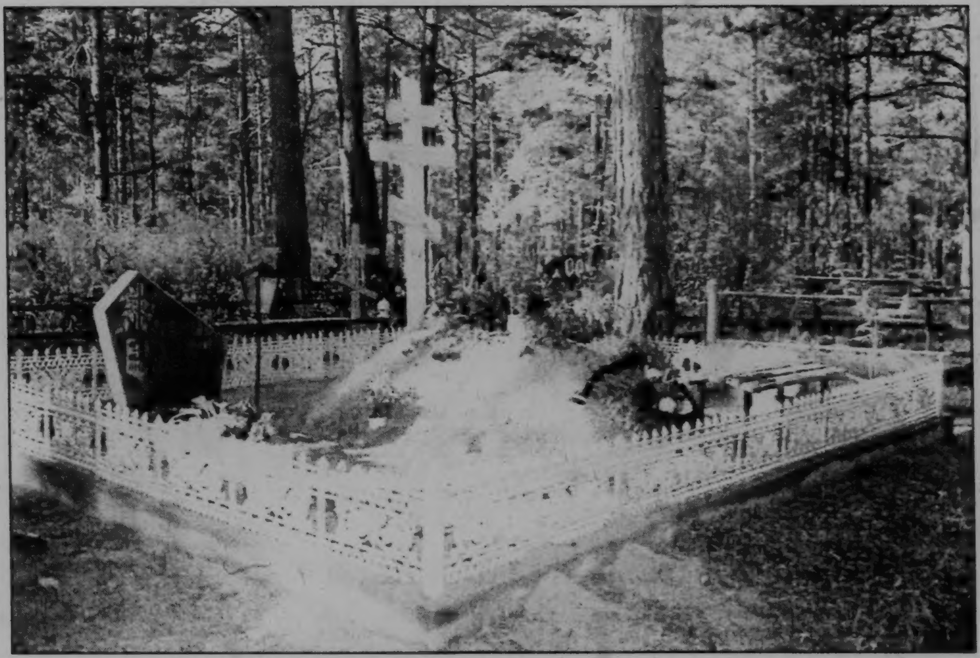

Figure 43: Standard Grave, Narva

and the religious world view into the people's consciousness" (cited in Pankhurst 1996: 143). This can be explained by the fact that the popular beliefs and rituals of the Russian populace were not dependent on Church officials for their continued existence. Certain rituals even continued in spite of the Orthodox Church's disapproval, and this is a testament to the power of *habitus* despite the opposition of the state.

At the time of this writing, the former republics of the Soviet Union are in a period of religious revival. In the Russian Federation, church attendance is not increasing dramatically; however, many people are being baptized. This is not a contradiction in itself, as regular church attendance is not required for Russian Orthodox believers. As Pankhurst points out, "One gains membership in the Russian Orthodox Church first and foremost through baptism performed at birth and only secondarily through participation in religious worship" (Pankhurst 1996: 128). This is in agreement with what I observed in Narva; the Orthodox faithful I met stressed that being an Orthodox Christian meant internal belief rather than external display of piety. Virtually all the people I interviewed in Narva—believers and atheists alike—carried out various aspects of the traditional funerary rites. The wake lasted three days; kin and friends met after nine and forty days, and then again a year after the person's death. Few could explain in great detail all of the religious significance behind the rituals, but all perceived them as being the right thing to do. It would be considered *nekul'turno* or un-cultured not to respect these rituals.

Russians maintained important traditions in spite of Orthodoxy and Soviet Communism. True, the Russian Orthodox Church is investing much energy into reaffirming the religious and traditional nature of the practices maintained throughout the Soviet period, but this does not mean that the Russian Orthodox Church is inventing anything. A certain parallel can be drawn with anthropological research being conducted in Canada among First Nations communities. James M^{c}Donald examines the recent history of potlatches, and documents their revival, as well as his own participation as a researcher in their revival. M^{c}Donald relates that even though the potlatches were banned and—in the First Nation's community he was studying—had not been held since the 1930s, feasting still occurred under other guises (1995, 1990). He then uses Bourdieu's concepts of *doxa*, *habitus*, and 'practice' as an alternative to 'invented traditions' in order to analyze the 'cultural revival' underway (M^{c}Donald 1995). A strong case could be made that similar processes are under way in Narva and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. One could quite legitimately argue that many funeral practices were maintained for reasons of *doxa* and *habitus*; it would have been unthinkable not to hold a dinner to commemorate a dead relative on the occasion of the third, ninth, and fortieth day after their death. Likewise, it would be counter to the *habitus* (and therefore uncultured) not to visit graves or to remember the dead on their birth and death day. Such practices contribute to the social reproduction of the community. At the present time, the Russian Orthodox Church is simply trying to impart the Orthodox 'rationale' behind the practices. A recent example of this occurred with the sinking of the Kursk submarine in August 2000 and the attendant loss of life; the Russian Orthodox Church organized a public commemoration to honour the dead exactly forty days after the submarine sank. The significance behind the fortieth day escaped foreign observers, but to the Russians, this was likely a logical occurrence.

The above example also illustrates the ways in which states and state structures can appropriate the symbols of everyday life in order to further political goals. Given that the state was criticized for its handling of the Kursk incident and was blamed for the death of many of the sailors trapped in the submarine, the act of commemorating the '40th day'—an important day in marking the death of an individual which is celebrated with family and friends—was used by the state to show solidarity with the families of the dead, and to portray state officials in a better light. To use a term put forward in an earlier chapter, the state was *curating* a sense of nationhood as the entire nation could be seen as mourning for the dead. This was achieved by playing upon the *habitus* of the larger population.

The use of Bourdieu's *habitus* is appropriate in this instance as it avoids the extremes of constructivism: culture is not entirely spurious as certain practices are maintained over the generations and help to shape an individual's understanding of their larger social universe. According to Jonathan Turner and Stephan Fuchs, Bourdieu's cultural structuralism "avoids the indeterminate view

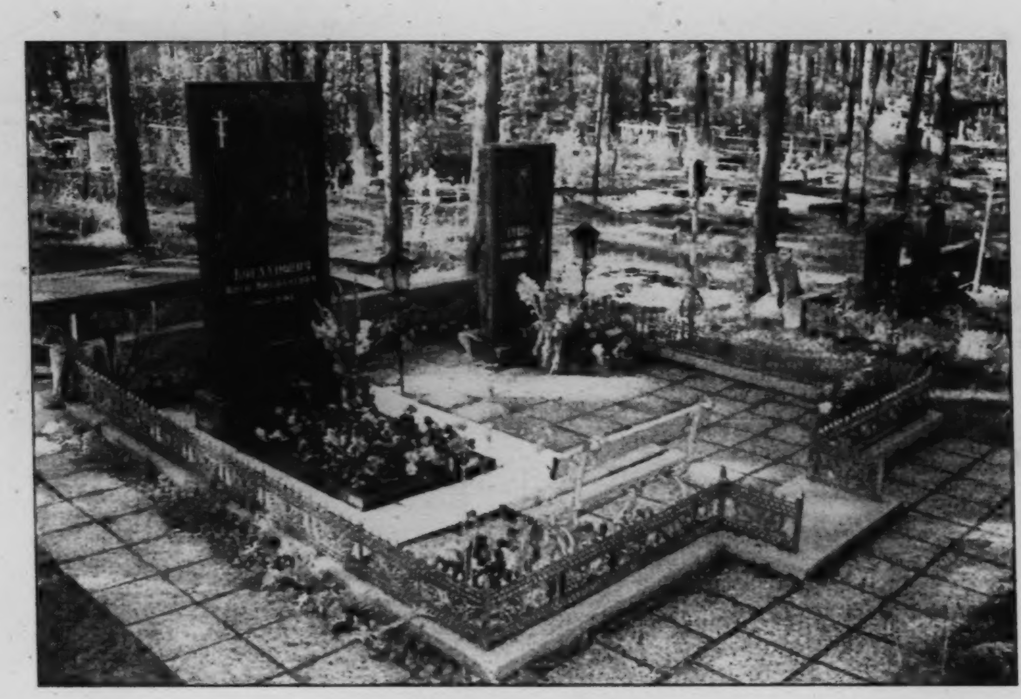

Figure 44: Lavish Grave, Narva

of culture as a system of symbols that can be defined and negotiated at will by creative and spontaneous agents" (2003: 501). *Habitus* is not constructed by individuals, but rather is shaped by larger social forces (notably class) and affirms that culture has a structure and a reality; "It 'orients' their [individuals] actions and inclinations without strictly determining them" (Bourdieu 1994: 13). In the case of Russians in Narva, the proper respect for graveyards defines an individual as 'cultured' and as a respected member of society. It is interesting to note the way in which the practices of visiting and maintaining graveyards have become a form of symbolic competition used by various groups in Narva to define themselves as rightfully belonging to the city and to root them in the territory. This is in direct opposition to the policies of the Estonian state, which have effectively delegitimized these groups belonging by not granting citizenship to all inhabitants. In essence, standard practice is used to counter state policies since Russians use graveyard to symbolically justify their presence in Narva and, by extension, the Republic of Estonia.

Historical Context

The quotations cited by my key informants were selected because they are representative of the discourse concerning death and graveyards in Narva. Though my focus was on the thoughts and practices of contemporary Russians, Daniel Kaiser's article "Death and Dying in Early Modern Russia" (1992) allowed for a diachronic analysis of Russian mortuary traditions. Though Kaiser's analysis does not extend past the 18th century, the description provided of death and dying was virtually identical to the information collected in the course of my fieldwork. Not only would certain traditions extend at least five centuries, others seemed to be rooted in much older pagan traditions that predated the arrival of Christianity in Eastern Europe. If anything, this underscores the fact that those traditions particularly significant to a population are maintained over time.

The idea of the struggle of the soul leaving the body is evidenced in many wills and testaments. Kaiser cites Iurii Iansheevich Suleshov, who directed in his last will and testament that services be said after his death in order to facilitate the "separation of my soul from the body" (1992: 225). In addition, certain wealthier individuals even set aside money to ensure that someone would read the Psalter day and night at their home and at their grave during the first forty days after their death. Some even went as far as to having a small shelter built at the gravesite (Kaiser 1992: 237). In addition to having prayers said over the graves, devout Orthodox Christians aspired to having a mass that was celebrated daily for this all-important forty-day period. Drawing from the theory of Victor Turner, Kaiser sees this period as an important liminal period in the rite of passage that is death. To cite Kaiser, "Therefore, liminality finds expression, not in the burial rites themselves, but rather in the periodicity that characterized Muscovite death remembrances, all of which revolved around a period of 40 days" (1992: 235). Again, the rationale behind the importance of this first forty days was not that different from the explanations Svetlana had provided me in my interviews. As Kaiser explains, "The texts make it clear that the 40 days after death represented a dangerous transitional period when the soul of the deceased had not yet found its permanent rest" (1992: 236).

Not only was the importance of these first two-score days after death central to Early Modern Muscovite society, but so were meals organized at the third, ninth, twentieth, and fortieth days after death. Kaiser cites Ivan Vasil'evich Shcheclkalov, who bequeathed money to feast the monks of the Trinity St. Sergius Monastery (1992: 238). As is the case with much of Orthodox tradition, the roots of these funeral feasts are to be found in pre-Christian practices. Kaiser notes that in the largely pagan countryside, the dead were recalled in special remembrances on the second, third, seventh, ninth, twentieth, and fortieth day after death. Different regions adopted different combinations of days, but the third and fortieth seem to have been universally feasted in the Eastern Slav lands (see Kaiser 1992: 239). On these occasions, a feast would be held in the home after the return of close relatives from the sepulcher (see Kaiser 1992: 239). In earlier times, the feast would have been held at the site of the grave, which would perhaps indicate why food continues to be left at the grave. However, as Kaiser demonstrates, the mortuary rituals and the practices of the region were the result of a syncretism of pagan and Christian beliefs, the essentials of which are maintained to this day: close family members must remember the dead with feasts at specific times because this is a dangerous time for the souls of the dead.

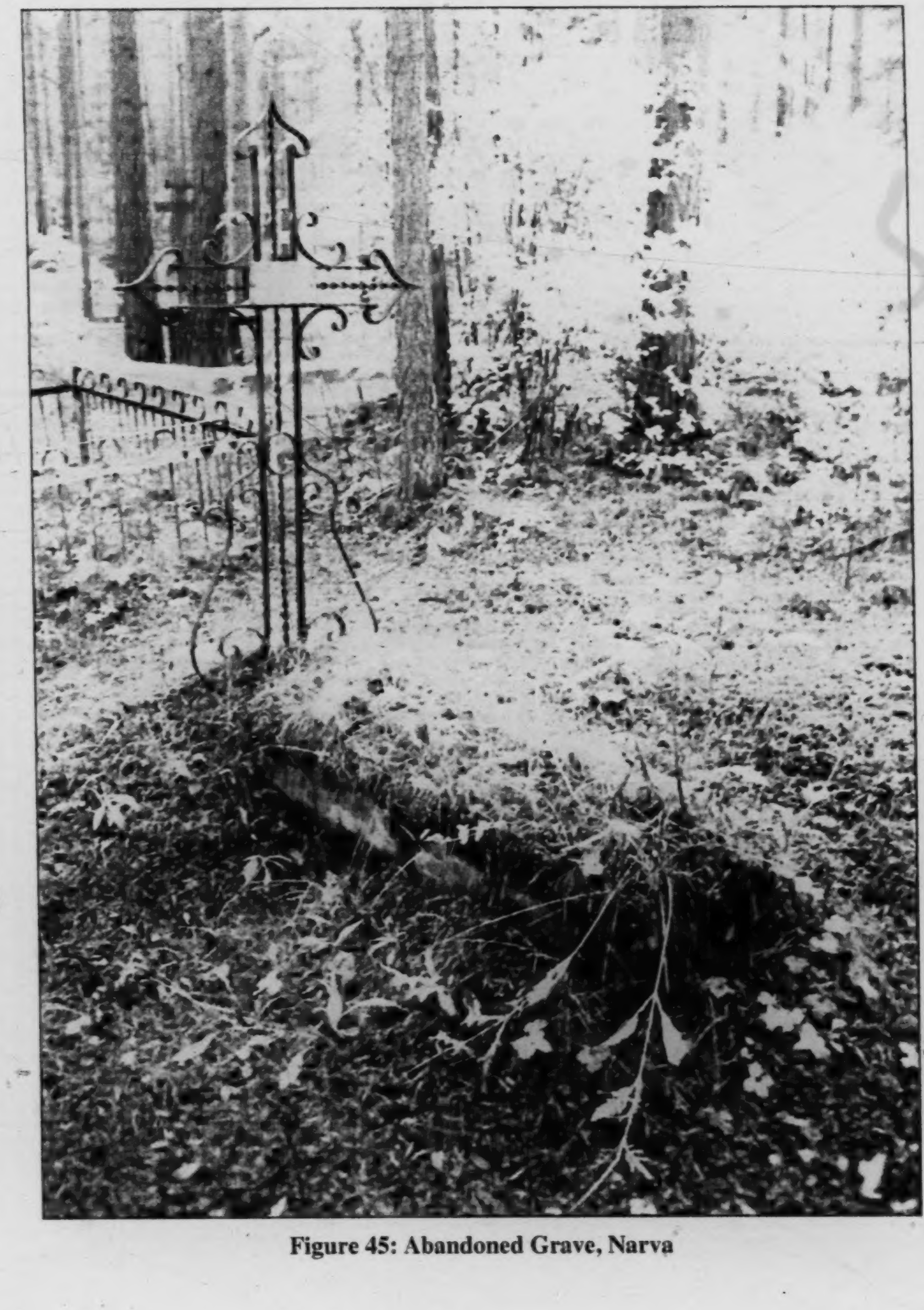

Figure 45: Abandoned Grave, Narva

The end of the final forty days after death marked the end of the first stage of mourning, but the dead were not forgotten in Early Moscow. Kaiser's historical evidence indicates that wealthy Muscovites set aside money to pay for feasts on both their day of death and their birthday. As early as the sixteenth century, we see that a core practice was already in existence (see Kaiser 1992: 242). Kaiser did not pursue the research after the 18th century, but my research indicates that the essentials were maintained, and this in spite of over seventy years of Communism. Interestingly, the aspects that survived the most intact were those that predated the arrival of Christianity. Kaiser writes how "The periodicity of mourning, the nature of commemorations, the funeral cortege, and funeral meals all derived their meaning from rituals that pre-dated Christianization. Even the idea that death separated spirit from body was part of pagan religion long before the message of Easter reached those lands" (1992: 247).

Fieldwork Observations: Death, the Body, and the Corpse

Death begins a series of rituals and services that culminate in the individual's burial. In order to provide a thorough description of the rituals preceding burials, two sources were consulted. The first is the *Russkii pravoslavnyi obriad pogrebeniia* or *Russian Orthodox Rites of Burial* (published in Moscow by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1996), and the second is a brochure from the series *Our Traditions* (*Nashi traditsii*) entitled *Pravoslavnyi obriad pogrebeniia* or *Orthodox Burial Traditions* (also published by the Russian

Orthodox Church in Moscow in 1996). Both of these works effectively summarize the major burial rites and traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church. Following death, it was necessary to prepare the corpse and the spiritual essence within for the afterlife. Particular care was paid to the corpse, since it was viewed in Russian Orthodox belief as the 'temple' of the soul. On the day of the Last Judgment, the physical body of the deceased would be resurrected, and the dead would rise up from their graves. As a consequence, the coffin and the graveyard were viewed as a 'home' for the dead, and the deceased's relatives had a duty to maintain the graveyard as clean as they could, as it was the place of the future resurrection. Likewise, the corpse was to be placed in the coffin in a dignified state, as the body would rise before God at the Last Judgment.

The primary task was the washing of the corpse; this was not only a hygienic measure, but also a testament to the future resurrection. Once, there had even existed specialists whose work was to clean corpses. After being washed, the corpse was dressed in new, clean clothing, and the forehead was adorned with a small 'halo,' a band of paper with representations of God and the Saints—a symbol of the Heavenly Kingdom. The Orthodox Church required an open casket, with the corpse present during the funeral service. The coffin was only closed when it was time to transport the deceased to the graveyard for burial. Though it was a practice discouraged by the Church, goods were often placed in the grave such as money, personal belongings, and food. However, the Church encouraged believers to place sacred objects in the coffin in addition to the cross. Popular items include a small icon of a saint, church candles, prayer books, and other ritual items.

Before the coffin was placed in the ground, the soil at the bottom of the grave was sprinkled with holy water and the grave filled with the smoke of burning incense. The burial serves as a ritual farewell to the relatives and friends of the deceased. As I will discuss later, for the soul of the deceased, the burial was simply the start of a much longer journey into the afterlife. In order to understand current practices, it is equally important for the researcher to consider how and why older traditions were maintained in spite of official Soviet atheism that tried to eradicate all vestiges of religious practice and belief.

An Account of a Moscow Burial, 2001

In the month of May 2001, I attended my first burial. The day started at the morgue, where family and friends congregated and waited for the body to be brought out. I was surprised at the rhythm of the events. We were told that it was our turn, and we entered a small circular room. At the centre, the coffin was laid out, flowers were placed on the body, and recorded classical music played in the background. Grieving relatives went to the body, but we were only allowed a few minutes. Very quickly, the coffin was closed and the corpse was carried out to the waiting hearse-bus. I was told to get on the bus, which seated close to a dozen people. As more than twelve people had been at the morgue, we filled the hearse

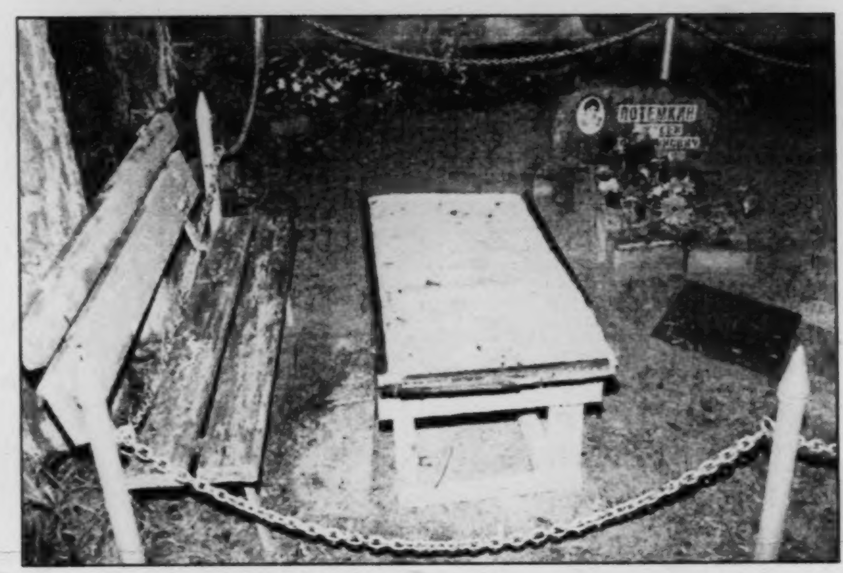

Figure 46: Bench to Sit on and Remember, Narva

while the remainder followed in their cars. I was quite surprised to see that a Russian Orthodox Priest wearing the traditional black robe was waiting for us.

Though there was no religious ceremony held at a church, elements of Russian Orthodoxy began to seep into the day's activities. The deceased was covered with a white sheet decorated with Christian motifs: the crucified Christ, saints, and other iconic images. The paper 'halo' was placed on the head of the deceased by the Priest; the corpse was being sanctified according to Russian Orthodox tradition even though there was no church ceremony.

Accompanied by family members and one anthropologist, the corpse made its way through Moscow. The cemetery was located on the outskirts of the city—a 1731 edict forbade the burial of the dead within city boundaries (see Tereshchenko 2001: 230). It was an immense graveyard, reputed to be one of the largest in the world. However, it bore much resemblance to the smaller graveyards of Narva, with trees, benches, and fences surrounding individual or family graves. The hearse-bus came to a stop and the gravediggers met us at the main road. They pulled the coffin out of the back, and wheeled it to the freshly dug grave.

The ceremony at the graveside lasted half-an-hour or so. The priest presided, reciting a number of prayers and cleansing the grave with incense before finally delivering a homily. Friends of the deceased spoke in remembrance of the man and his distinguished career. Before the casket was closed, the priest placed a written prayer inside the coffin. This denotes that even those who were not necessarily religious or practicing Christians can benefit from the intervention of the Church at the time of resurrection. The flowers were collected and the casket closed before the gravediggers lowered the casket into the ground, at which point the priest threw in a handful of dirt, followed by relatives. After this, the gravediggers began the task of covering the body with soil.

I was surprised by the speed of the gravediggers. Within a few minutes, they had finished their task. As they were hurriedly and adeptly shoveling soil, the priest discretely left the gravesite, leaving only family and friends behind. As the gravediggers finished, family members produced a simple meal of sandwiches, a jar of sweetened rice, and a bottle of vodka. The choice of the rice is highly symbolic, as it represents the resurrection. Spoonfuls of rice were served on paper napkins and the sandwiches were handed out. Once this was done and the gravediggers were gone, the bottle of vodka was opened. In a processional manner, starting with the men, each individual was poured a small tumbler of vodka, and emptied it into the grave. This done, the participant then raised a toast to the deceased and drank some vodka. The toast lasted a few minutes and once completed, the family returned to the hearse-bus. The priest, a young man, removed his robe and, dressed in jeans and a shirt, gave his final condolences to the family before walking away. The family then proceeded to the apartment of the deceased man's daughter for a memorial meal. Though each burial would be slightly different, this one was nevertheless representative of a much larger Russian tradition of death and the afterlife.

Souls, Spirits and Other Beliefs Regarding the Afterlife...

Virtually all the people I interviewed in Narva, believers and atheists alike, carried out various aspects of the traditional funerary rites. Few could explain in great detail all of the religious significance behind the rituals, but they saw them as the right thing to do. I examine a number of sources in order to sketch some of the essential rituals and belief surrounding death; in addition, I investigate some of the more meaningful key words such as *dusha* (soul) and *dukh* (spirit). Much of the information presented here I gathered from Svetlana[50], a woman I interviewed in Narva. A Russian Orthodox[51], Svetlana presented me with a coherent description of what happens when a person dies. I will be presenting this information in her words. I will also be incorporating into my description and analysis various religious texts easily accessible to the population at large, as well as information gathered from an interview with a local Russian Orthodox priest. I do not purport to provide an exhaustive analysis of Russian Orthodox theology; rather, my intention is to examine the beliefs people may hold, and the importance of those beliefs in creating ties to the land.

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[50] The first person I met in Narva was Svetlana's husband, Genadii. I had arrived in Narva early in the morning and was trying to orient myself. I saw a man walking his dog, and I went up to him. I asked him some questions. He seemed a pleasant fellow, so I asked him to join me for a coffee. He declined, but invited me instead to go to his apartment. I followed. I had a coffee, and met with Svetlana. I learned that Svetlana taught English courses at a local training center, and that Genadii worked as a technician in the local dental clinic.

[51] Svetlana and Genadii are Russian Orthodox, but their spirituality did not end there. Genadii, for example, was quite knowledgeable in astrology and numerology.

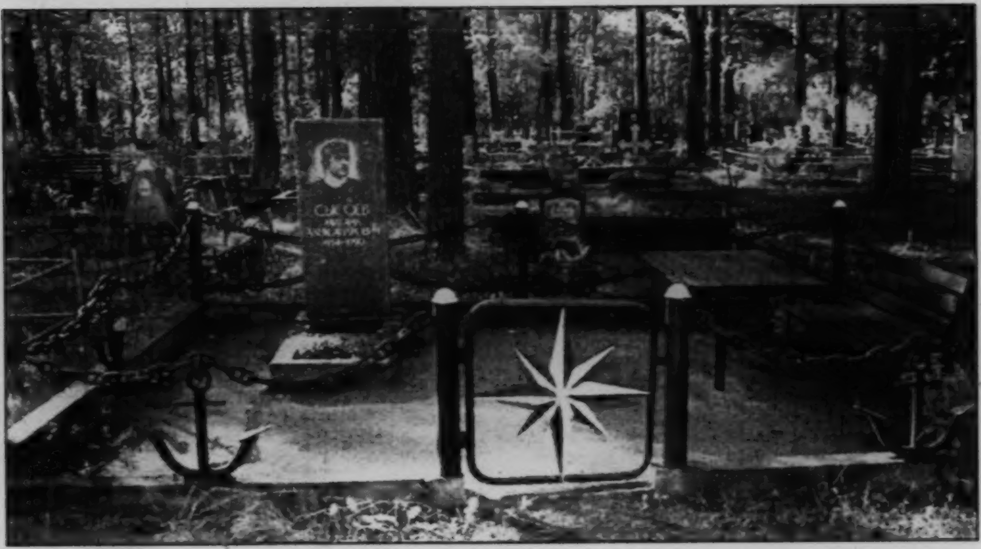

Figure 47: Sailor Motif Grave, Narva

Death and the Soul

The following is an account narrated by Svetlana that examines her beliefs concerning what happens following the death of an individual:

> When a person dies, his physical body dies that is his clothing. Our soul still stays with us, and she[52] is torn away [from the body] and for three days she is still with us. In those three days the soul of the person sees. And that is why in the course of those three days it is forbidden to bury the body, only after three days is it possible to bury the body, because the soul is [until then] still very much tied to the body and goes to it. ...
>
> For the soul, the first three days are very strange, because she sees her unmoving physical body. I read a short story of a dead fellow, who wrote about it, that when he fell in Heaven's kingdom, that he asked one to show how he now was. And for a long time they dissuaded him, telling him that it was not necessary to look, and to the effect that why would he want to look when he is there lying under the earth. But he persisted, and they showed him. Of course it was not a very pleasing sight to see his lifeless body. Well, as they say, death does not make a person beautiful (Svetlana, personal communication, 1997).

The Wake

As was the case in the Catholic and other Christian traditions, the body was laid out for three days before burial. The corpse was washed according to certain precepts explained earlier. At this point it is appropriate to distinguish between the soul (*dusha*) and the spirit (*dukh*). The soul is, in popular usage, the interior psychological world of an individual, the consciousness. From the religious viewpoint, the soul is defined as the supernatural, immaterial, point of origin in an individual that continues to live after his or her death. The spirit in Russian Orthodox belief was the formless, supernatural essence. In many ways, the usage of *dusha* and *dukh* are very close to the French terms *âme* and *esprit*. The Russian expression for the Holy Ghost (*Svyatoi Dukh*), for example, is the same construction as the French *Esprit Saint*. What distinguishes the *dusha* is that it is a conscious entity, whereas the *dukh* is seemingly not conscious. It can animate, give strength to an individual, but it is not consciousness per se. Svetlana makes a clear distinction between the *dusha* and the *dukh*; both inhabit the body, the outer clothing of an individual, but they are not one and the same. According to Svetlana, they even leave the body at different times after the death of an individual.

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[52] I refer to the soul as "she" in order to respect Russian grammar, as "*dusha*" is a feminine noun and referred to as "she" in the Russian language.

Three, Nine, and Forty days

Svetlana provided me with her explanation of the significance behind the third, ninth, and fortieth day after death:

> That is why here the third, ninth are marked, and at the fortieth day the soul has already left entirely. Precisely in this way: in the first three days the soul is still here, on the ninth day she is released [from the body], and on the fortieth day both the soul and the spirit leave, but in a year they return, given the possibility once more of looking at the world, [to see] how things here are going, and [to see] how everything is going without them. And, then already in a year the soul leaves entirely and does not return. Therefore in the Russian Orthodox Church we do not mark the second, third year and so on (Svetlana, personal communication, 1997).

Given that at these occasions (third day, ninth day, fortieth day, and one year after the person's day of death) the soul can see, it is at these times family and friends gather to mark these important rites of passage; all the deceased's loved ones gather to share a meal. Svetlana specified that in Siberia, where she grew up, there were particular rites associated with the funeral repasts. The food served would usually consist of rice, raisins, fish dishes, mushroom dishes, *piroshkiis*, and perhaps a few meat dishes. She stated that in the past, the people assembled at the repast would refrain from drinking, but this is no longer the case. As Svetlana mentioned, the first anniversary of the deceased's death is particularly significant, since it is the last time that the soul can see what is happening in her home and can look upon her friends and family directly. As I gathered from my informants in Narva, it would be terribly shameful (*stydno*) to forget the deceased person at these times.

Svetlana's description of Russian Orthodox beliefs concerning death is relatively close to the Church line. In another official Russian Orthodox booklet, *Orthodox Rites of Burial: Teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church (Pravoslavny obryad pogrebeniya. Po ucheniya Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi)* published in 1996 by the Holy Trinity Sergeivoi Monastery in Moscow, every detail surrounding the death of an individual is outlined. The booklet explains that at the moment of death, the soul is languorous. Before exiting the body, the soul meets the Saint Guardian Angel, the Angel of Christ, who was present at the christening. One of the prayers in a Russian Orthodox prayer book—a gift given to me by

Svetlana before my return to Canada—is directed to this angel, and refers to him as "Angel of Christ, my saint guardian and protector of my soul and body." The intervention of the Angel of Christ would be necessary, since the soul also meets malicious spirits or demons. The faces of the demons are so horrible that the soul is disturbed and shaken by fear. In the absence of a priest, relatives or close friends must read the Canon at the exit of the soul from the body. Unfortunately, this booklet does not specify whether an individual possesses a spirit in addition to a soul. However, in a dictionary published by the Imperial Academy of Sciences, one of the definitions given for *dukh* is that of ghost. The *dukh* is defined first and foremost as a bodiless existence, whereas the *dusha* is defined as the immortal, spiritual existence endowed with reason and will.

The booklet does state that the marking of the third, ninth, and fortieth days are ancient church customs, and that they are in accordance with the teachings of the Church about the state of the soul outside the coffin. The number three is significant since it is in reference to the Holy Trinity and the three days preceding Christ's resurrection. In the first two days after a person's death, his or her soul, accompanied by an angel, wanders the earth, visiting those places where she remembers happiness and grief, hateful and kind occurrences. It is only on the third day that the soul is brought before God in Heaven in order to worship Him. After the third day, the soul enters into heavenly places, accompanied by angels, and contemplates their beauty. In that state, the soul spends six days before the Lord once again beckons it to Him for worship. It is after the ninth day that the angels lead the soul to Hell. On the fortieth day, the soul is brought a third time before God in worship. This is when the soul's fate is decided. According to the booklet, the prayer offered on the fortieth day is especially important since it expiates the sins of the deceased. Finally, the booklet states that after forty days, the prayers for the deceased do not end, but simply occur on the various days of remembrance—notably, the day of birth and the day of death of the deceased. The day of death is significant since it marks the day of birth into a new, everlasting life.

Svetlana's description of the meal that should be served at these repasts confroms with the booklet. Again, the booklet specifies that the first course should be sweet oatmeal made of wheat or rice with honey or raisins. The grains of wheat or rice are symbols of the Resurrection, whereas honey is a symbol of the Kingdom of God. The booklet goes on to explain that people should not drink wine at the repast because it is a symbol of earthly pleasures, whereas the repast is meant for prayers to help the deceased who might be suffering in life after death. It is specified that libations (notably vodka) should not be consumed at this time, even if the deceased enjoyed drinking. The booklet note that: "It is well known that 'drunken' repasts often turn into disgraceful mobs in which the deceased is simply forgotten" (p. 35). Rather, those gathered in repast should conduct themselves decently, holding pious conversations in which the deceased's good qualities and deeds are remembered. Finally, the booklet condemns the custom of placing a plate at the table with a piece of bread and a wineglass of vodka, since this practice is a survivor of paganism and should not be observed in Russian Orthodox families. Again, as discussed, the Orthodox Church tries to discourage certain practices that it sees as inappropriate.

Graveyards and Tombs: Ancient and Modern, 1997.

On a sunny September afternoon, I decided to visit the cemeteries neighbouring Narva in North-Eastern Estonia. In actuality, I did not feel that I had much of a choice. All summer, I had been interviewing people, compiling data for my research, and I had constantly heard references to graveyards and the importance of visiting the graves of deceased family and friends. I could not help being surprised by the recurring theme of graves among the Russian speaking community of Narva. I met one woman, for example, who put great effort into organizing transportation and visas to elderly inhabitants of Narva who wanted to visit graves located in Ivangorod, the city on the other side of the river, now located in Russian territory. Another person, a director of a factory on the outskirts of Narva, mentioned that he had not been to Ivangorod for over two years, and that he should make an effort to go, since the graves of some relatives were located there. Even in the open-air market, I would often hear one *babushka*[53] telling another that she had recently gone to the cemetery. The visiting of cemeteries was not even limited to Russians; one ethnic Estonian living in

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[53] The term *babushka* signifies grandmother in Russian. In general, strangers are often referred to in kinship terms. Any older woman is then *babushka*, an elderly man is *dedyshka* (grandfather), a middle-aged man *dyadya* (uncle), and so on. A young man is simply referred to in this way as *molodoy chelovek* (young person) and a young woman is a *devushka*.

Narva told me that he had been on a trip to visit the graves of various ancestors located throughout Estonia. The German community association in Narva had taken it upon itself to clean up the graves of long-deceased Germans as one of their activities. Clearly, graves are significant to the inhabitants of Narva. This is in sharp contrast to Moscow, where people certainly did visit graves of relatives, but it was not given nearly the same prominence as in Narva. In Moscow, I did not hear people discussing recent trips to the cemetery in the same way the inhabitants of Narva did on countless occasions.

When I visited the graveyards surrounding Narva, I understood the importance Russians attributed to graveyards. The first graveyard I saw was located in a heavily wooded setting, almost a forest, where the trees towered above the graves, and where I could see people tending the graves themselves. I walked around, exploring the sites, noting the symbolism of the graveyards, which I shall analyze in greater detail below. I came upon one woman, likely in her fifties, tidying up a grave. It was immaculate; not one solitary leaf or twig remained on the ground. I started talking to her, and she explained to me that two or three times a year, she comes to the graveyard to take care of the family plots. She told me that, in all, seventeen of her family members were buried in this graveyard, and then she showed me each of the graves and explained how the care of graves had been distributed among the women. She took care of certain graves, and her sister-in-law took care of others. Clearly, as had been stressed by countless informants I had interviewed, people put much time and energy into maintaining graves, and, as I shall also examine, they spent a great deal of time visiting the graves of their families.

This necessity to clean and care for gravesites contrasted with the older graves I had visited in the area; forest had largely reclaimed the graveyards, and the headstones were barely visible through the undergrowth. Many of these graves belonged to Baltic Germans or others who did not have any direct descendants left in Narva, perhaps even in Estonia. As I was coming to understand, it would be shameful to the Russians of Narva to leave a relative's grave untended, and many in Eastern Europe travel long distances simply to visit the graves of deceased relatives.

Analysis of Graveyards and the Russian Ethos

In a series of photos published in the Estonian Russian-language newspaper *ME*, a broken cross is portrayed with the caption "Already, nobody comes here"[54]. In the centre, a group of aged women are sitting on a bench facing graves. The caption states simply, "Sitting, remembering." The final photo is that of a ribbon, and the caption to the photo states, "The veterans of the navy do not forget Rossiisskii sailors". Above the photos, we read the following: "The treatment the living give to the memory of the dead long buried is considered a measure of human culture. The condition of graves and graveyards in Europe defines the state of the economy and the morals of a state." In Russian communities, the care of graves was a family's responsibility and, as mentioned previously, was tied to the religious worldview; graves had to be kept clean since they would be the site of the resurrection. The burial expense covers a number of amenities including the cost of having a gravesite cleaned, the cost of buying a grave plot, the costs of gravestones, and so forth. This article corroborates what I observed while doing my fieldwork: it is considered cultured to visit the graves of the dead; graves must be cleaned by relatives; and the graves of fallen soldiers are considered especially sacred. According to the article, if graves are not maintained, it is not only shameful to the family, but it is also a reflection of a country's morality. I would argue that this is a Russian projection of Russian values as universal human attributes.

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[54] Article "...Lyubov k otechesim grobam" or roughly translated as "...Love for ancestral graves" published in *ME*, October 16, 1997, page 9

As we have seen, the expression *kul'turnii chelovek*, or cultured fellow, is quite loaded. It means more than simply a cultivated individual. To be *kul'turnii* means to respect the morals of society. It is to be well-mannered and respectful of what should be done. Various family traditions continue to be observed since it would be uncultured not to do so. In addition, some simply fear offending the dead. One Russian woman, a recent immigrant from Ukraine to Canada, explained that she had gone to her mother's funeral, but could not stay until the very end, since she was feeling quite sick. She went home, lay down, and then saw her mother, who reproached her for not having been there and burying her properly. Whether ghost or dream, the underlying message is clear: respect must be shown to the deceased.

Believers are enjoined by the Orthodox Church to adorn individual graves with a simple cross, one made of metal, cement, or wood rather than an expensive monument made of granite or marble (*Orthodox Burial Rites*, 1996). In many ways, this is meant to counter a growing trend among emerging new moneyed Russian classes. I did happen upon such graves in Narva. One in particular was quite lavish; the headstone, made of marble, was taller than I was, approximately two meters in height. The deceased's image had been engraved in the stone, showing him standing next to a German luxury car. I was not able to find out more about this individual, but I did hear complaints about an extravagant headstone that had been erected on the grave of a well-known Mafioso who had been shot. What was particularly galling about this gravestone was that it was erected next to the graves of the deceased soldiers of the "Great Patriotic War" (World War II). Given the sacred overtones of the war and the reverence paid to those who died in the war, it is understandable that such a gravestone next to the graves of war heroes would be considered sacrilegious. Such graves and headstones are quite exceptional. The graves I saw in Narva tended to be much more modest, though Russians and others in Narva will scrimp and save considerable sums of money to invest in lavish headstones, as it is considered a sign of love and devotion to a deceased family member.

The typical grave in Narva was enclosed using either an actual fence or a largely symbolic enclosure of cement outlining the area of the grave. There was invariably a headstone, which included an image of the deceased, often in the form of a photo mounted in the headstone. In the newer graves, a cross indicated that a person was Russian Orthodox. I did notice one headstone with an engraved Crescent and Star, a symbol often associated with Tatarstan and the other Turkic-speaking populations and countries, including Turkey itself. What is most striking is that the benches and small tables were placed in the corner of the graves. Clearly, the cemetery is meant to be inviting, so that people can stay and spend some time next to the graves of the deceased. Another peculiar detail was the tying of black ribbons to the trunks of trees. I was later told that these ribbons came from the wreaths of flowers that were laid onto the grave after the funeral. The same person who told me about the wreaths also explained the importance of trees in the cemetery, which are there for birds to roost upon. The birds, according to popular belief, help souls fly to heaven.

In older neighbouring cemeteries, the forest was wreaking havoc with the graves; it had broken through fences, and some graves were barely visible through the shrubs and moss. However, the first cemetery I visited was exceptionally well maintained. The graves were clean, and there were no leaves or other debris littering the soil. I could see that a lot of effort was put into maintaining the graves. I saw one older woman with a young child sweeping one grave. Others were cutting shrubs and hauling away broken branches.

Clearly, people do visit graves on a regular basis. In addition to the funeral rites and the deceased person's birthday or day of death, the Russian Orthodox Church recommends a number of days for visiting the cemetery. For example, the

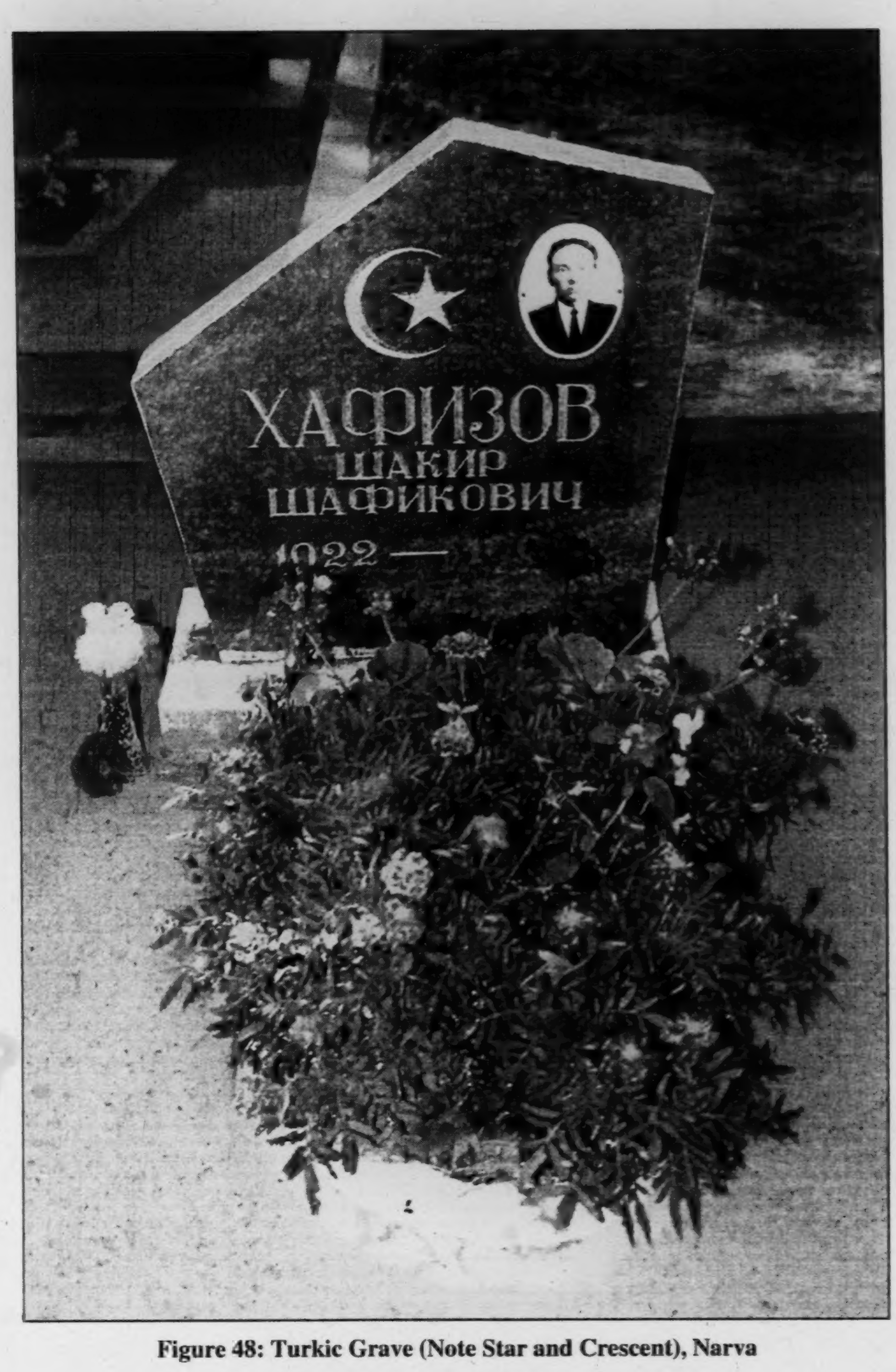
ХАФИЗОВ
ШАКИР
ШАФИКОВИЧ
1922 —

Figure 48: Turkic Grave (Note Star and Crescent), Narva

Russian Orthodox Church had a series of six 'Parents' Saturdays', in which believers would congregate at Church to remember dead relatives, and afterwards would visit the graves of their deceased kin. The Priest would collect the names of the baptized deceased and would lead prayers for their departed souls. Motive candles would be placed in front of the Cross. There are many traditions observed on these Parents' Saturdays visits, such as praying at the grave, wailing on the graves of the deceased, cleaning the grave site, recounting to the dead the events following their death, bringing food and drink to the graves, and finally returning home to feast and to honour the dead. Many of these practices can be traced in part to pagan traditions. It was believed that bringing quantities of sweet and delicious food would please the dead, who would in turn send good fortune to their homes. The food is of a ritual nature; different foods would have been brought and eaten at the graveyard on different Parents' Saturdays (see Tereshchenko 2001: 243). This syncretism of pagan and Christian practices survives to the present.

Two of the most attended Parents' Saturday's are *Dmitrievskaya Saturday* and *Troitskaya Saturday*. The first is held sometime in early November, and the second is the first Saturday prior to the fiftieth day after Easter (the start of a weeklong holiday celebrating the Holy Trinity). The Dmitrievskaya Saturday originated with the 1380 defeat of the Tatar forces in the Battle of Kulikovo. The Russian Prince Dmitry Donskoy proposed that the first Saturday prior to the

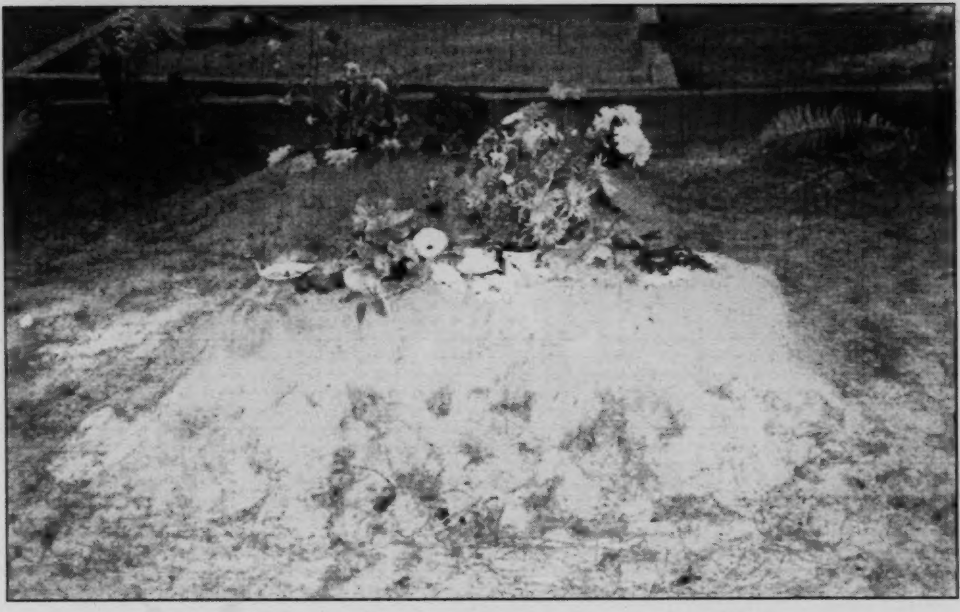

Figure 49: Recent Burial (Note Fruit on Grave), Narva

eighth day of November be set aside to remember the dead soldiers that perished in that battle. This date of November 8 was significant in that it was the holiday of the Saint martyr Dmitry Solunsky. Other princes and tsars followed suit, dedicating specific days in memory of those who had fallen in battle, but that did not enter into Russian Orthodox tradition.

Some individuals will visit the cemetery even more frequently, as was the case with one man I met in Narva. This man was likely to be deported in the near future; he had been an officer in the Red Army and was therefore not eligible for permanent residency in Estonia. Estonian laws did not take into account the fact that he had been born in what is now the Republic of Estonia; both of his parents are buried in the nearby cemetery. He told me that he visited his parents' graves every weekend, which helps to demonstrate the importance of visiting the graves of deceased family members, especially parents. This importance is particularly stressed in such places as Narva, where the future of the Russian speakers is as yet unclear.

A local priest whom I interviewed had an original interpretation as to why graves are important in the Russian Orthodox tradition. He thinks every deceased person is potentially a saint. By extension, all graveyards are saintly land and must be treated as such. This is not without precedent in the Russian Orthodox religious tradition; a number of Russian Orthodox saints were recognized when miracles occurred at the graves of quite ordinary people. We have the case of

Iakov Borovischsky, who became a saint after a coffin was carried by an ice floe during the spring flood to the town of Borovichi (in what it now Russia). He was recognized as a saint after several people had dreams in which the deceased said his name was Iakov. He was canonized in 1577 (Vlasov, 1992: 21).

Offerings had been left at the graves. In particular, the two fresh graves I happened upon while exploring the cemetery were piled with flowers and fruit. Clearly, the deceased had only been buried a few days prior to my visit. Candles were burning on one of the graves, and on the grave mound and a nearby table numerous apples had been left (Figs. 10 and 11). There were other signs that food was occasionally left at the graves; in the corner of one grave, I saw two old plates that had been placed to the side. Under the bench, there were a few bottles of alcohol.

The persistence of these funerary offerings is tied to the notion of the grave being a home for the deceased and the continuing presence of soul in the whereabouts of the grave. As the book *Russian Orthodox Burial Rites*, cited earlier in the chapter, explains, "The soul is to be found at home [the grave] until the sixth week [after death]" (1996: 81). Some of these traditions go back to pagan times; it was customary to build a replica of an actual home over the grave. Though this practice was discontinued, the belief in the grave as home for the soul continued in the 'little tradition'. In the popular traditions, a small tumbler of water (or vodka) was placed along with bread under an icon positioned on the grave. Likewise, very often a photo of the deceased would be placed next to the icon, with candles lit before them. Given that the grave was the home of the soul, a number of offerings were left on the grave or somewhere nearby. One typically finds a few decorated eggs and an Easter cake (at Easter), apples, candy, millet, or cookies on a table in the graveyard, and at times a small shot glass of spirits for the deceased. At other times, a bit of vodka was poured on the grave (*Russian Orthodox Burial Rites*, 1996: 93). The booklet *Orthodox Funeral Rites* (1996) indicates that these practices are widespread. In the section entitled "How to behave oneself in a cemetery," believers are told not to eat or drink in a cemetery, and especially not to pour some vodka on the grave mound. It concludes by saying that food should not be placed at the grave; it is better to give it to the destitute or the hungry (*Orthodox Funeral Rites,* 1996*:* 35-35). The Orthodox Church is categorically opposed to such practices; their continued present-day practice in Narva (as was visibly evident in the graveyard) is a testament to the staying power of the little tradition.

Epilogue: Monuments and the dead

After visiting Narva's graveyards, I toured the grounds of the textile factory located in Narva. What caught my attention was a monument located on the factory grounds. On it, a woman stands, fists clenched to her sides, looking forward. Behind her is an amorphous mass of women. There is no plaque, but simply the inclusive dates "1872-1972" engraved on the monument. The monument itself was typically Soviet; what was out of the ordinary were three

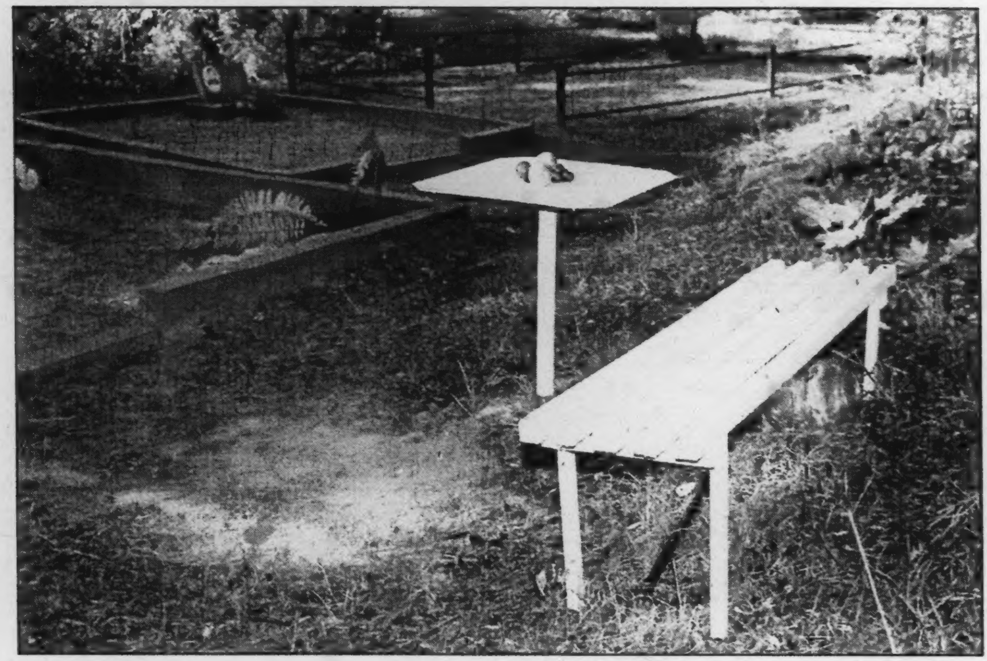

Figure 50: Table with "Offerings," Narva

apples someone had laid out at the feet of the sculpture of the woman. This was exactly the same symbolism I had witnessed at the cemetery, and had to be more than mere coincidence. It was clear to me that this public monument was equated with a more private monument, the grave of a relative or friend. This could help to explain the behaviour of those who went to public monuments, especially those in memory of the Great Patriotic War (World War II). Visitors frequently left flowers at the various war memorials in Narva. Given the millions who died during the war, it is not surprising that, for many, these public monuments to the deceased soldiers and civilians resonate personally. Likewise, the same reverence is due to these monuments as would be to any other gravesite.

The attachment of Russians of Narva to graves helps define the *Rodina*, or homeland, though it is often translated at 'motherland' it is a connection to the land that is a fundamental element of their identity. Nationalism can be defined in many ways, but one of the essential elements I have discovered in my research is the necessity of creating a familiar and culturally meaningful landscape, one that ties individuals to a particular place. It is my contention that the rituals of daily life—and of death—help define a certain understanding of local geography; moreover, it is by studying this constructed landscape that one gains a more thorough understanding of these people. The Russians and others living in Narva do not need politicians, journalists, or anyone else to tell them that Narva is their home; the graves of their parents and grandparents already attest to the fact that Narva is a *russkii gorod*, a Russian city.

The central feature of graveyards in Russian thought is the tradition of seeing a grave as a home for the soul and as the site of the future resurrection. This is not unique, but rather an idea that is central to Christian belief. However, among Russians and others in Narva, great emphasis is placed upon visiting the graves of the dead on a regular basis and ensuring the graves are neat and tidy. Graves are not peripheral but central to the community, and can be used, after a fashion, to define the territory. Likewise, the residents of Narva have a strong attachment to their city, as they consider it their home. There is little interest in leaving the city, and graves are often cited as a marker of territory: Narva is a Russian city because of Russian graveyards. This hearkens back to the medieval concept of the Russian land, which was the territory occupied by Russians. As a consequence, just as the graves are a home to the dead, Narva remains a home to the living. Through the use of graveyards and grave rituals, Russians and others in Narva root themselves to the soil through graves. Though many Russians are not citizens of Estonia, they affirm their conviction that they are rightful inhabitants of Narva through visiting the graves of deceased family members. The *habitus* of visiting graves thus becomes in itself a political act: it affirms that Narva is a "Russian city" in the face of government policies that state otherwise. It is perhaps not nationalism in the classic sense—the seeking of national independence and the creation of an autonomous nation-state—but it is a way for members of a community to use symbols to mark out its territory and to affirm their right to live in Estonia.

Conclusion

The research conducted in Narva provided insight into the meaning of nationhood and nationality among Russians and Russian-speakers. As reviewed in the thesis, the two terms are not to be confused; Russian-speakers are comprised of many nationalities, though they will speak Russian as either their maternal tongue or as their primary language of everyday conversation. This was highlighted by one Radio broadcast on the main Russian-language Estonian station; it defined the Russian-speaking community of Narva as comprised of seventeen nationalities. The Russian-language speakers share many of the same problems: most are not Estonian citizens, most speak little or no Estonian in Narva, and most must pass the same exams to prove their competency in Estonian and to gain citizenship. However, given that the overwhelming majority of Russian-speakers in Narva are ethnic Russians, speakers tend to slip from Russian-speakers to Russians in the course of a conversation. Though I did not focus on the Russian-speakers who were not ethnic Russians, the interviews conducted with many of the 'seventeen nationalities' demonstrate that though they do recognize themselves as Russian-speaking, all defined their nationality as other than Russian.

This research provided an example of how ideas of nation and nationality are understood and articulated in local communities and how the 'national habitus' can be used in the agency of individuals. In Narva, for example, the Russian soul is used to define various nationalities and as predicator of behaviour. The idea of the Russian soul is not new; the Russian intelligentsia in the 19th century made use of the concept of the national soul in literature, and the peasantry referred to the national soul and spirit in their folk sayings and proverbs. This indicates a degree of continuity in Russian ideas of nation and nationality and the importance of national souls in defining nations not only at the present, but also in the past. Not only is the Russian soul used to define individuals and communities, but also in mundane actions such as visiting graveyards define an individual's attachment to a particular location. Narva is defined as Russian due to the existence of Russian graveyards. However, this does not mean that Russians in Narva necessarily want to have Narva incorporated into the Russian Federation: most Russians want to become Estonian citizens, but they also want greater recognition for their language and are largely opposed to Estonian political practices that promote the economic interests of the ethnic Estonian population. Fieldwork in Narva and Russia permitted me a deeper understanding of the ways in which Russians articulate ideas of nation and nationality and use nationality to negotiate their status in the independent Republic of Estonia.

Though the research I conducted in Narva allowed me to answer many of the questions I had when I set out to do my fieldwork, many more interesting questions have arisen since. One question that merits further analysis is the question of the historical process that created the Russian *ethnie*. Adrien Hastings provides a compelling argument of the importance of religion in the rise of nationalism. Central to imagining the nation is the Bible that, according to Hastings, provides a model of the nation that stresses the unity of people, language, religion, territory and government. He continues by saying, "Perhaps it was an almost terrifyingly monolithic ideal, productive ever after of all sorts of dangerous fantasies, but was there, an all too obvious exemplar for Bible readers of what every other nation too might be, a mirror for national self-imagining" (Hastings, 1997: 18). Hastings correctly identifies two essential ingredients of nationalism: literacy of the masses and religion. The Russians did not achieve any degree of literacy until this century, but this does not mean that Orthodox writing did not influence the lives of both the nobility and the peasantry. The elite could read, and there are some indications that they were inspired by the Bible. Inspired by what he had read in his youth, Ivan the Terrible not only continued to expand the territory of Muscovy, he provided the foundation for the Russian Empire. It was also during his reign that Tatar khanates—Kazan and Astrakhan—were decisively defeated. Additionally, it was during his reign that Russians crossed the Urals and began their advance into Siberia; Russians reached the Pacific by 1643.

The Russian Medieval period certainly merits attention. More research will undoubtedly provide greater insight into the origins of the Russian sense of nationhood. Words such as *russkii* appeared quite early in the second millennium in addition to the expression *russkaya zemlya* or the Russian land. I have examined in a number of published works various early texts dating back as early as the 11th century; these indicate complex identities that include a growing sense of nationality. By the late 14th century, a Russian identity was clearly emerging, as can be seen in the writings of Epiphanius and his manuscript *Life of Stefan of Perm* (see Bouchard 2001, 2002, in press). Even though later Tsars such as Peter and Catherine did secularize the empire and provided new myths of Russia as a great power, the religious underpinnings of the Russian sense of consciousness remained. Anthony D. Smith notes the role of religion in shaping Polish and Russian nationhood: "Only their linguistic and religious cultures, the one Catholic, the other Orthodox, succeeded in crystallizing a sense of common and distinctive ethnicity, abetted by the memories of their early statehood under the Piasts and Rurikids (of Kievan Rus'). These memories were to play an important role in the later formation and definitions of the Polish and Russian nations from the fifteenth century on" (1991: 51). The idea of 'Holy Russia' was maintained in various circles—including the peasantry—over the centuries. One of Russia's greatest writers, Dostoevsky, reconciled the myths of Holy Russia with that of Russia the great empire. For him, to be Russian was to be Orthodox.

In addition to providing a sense of identity, the Orthodoxy of the Russian peasantry also provided a sense of place. As I have examined in great detail, Russian rituals associated with graveyards tie Russians to the land. These rituals perhaps originated in the High culture of Orthodoxy (the Great tradition), but once integrated into the popular culture, they maintained themselves over the generations, to use Redfield's terminology, they became a 'little tradition' or a tradition that is passed on in the oral tradition of the peasantry. I have also argued that these traditions can be described using Bourdieu's concept of habitus: they are simply carried out without question because that is what must be done. Narva is a Russian city—*russkii gorod*—because Russians are buried there. As I have reviewed in previous chapters, this is not to be viewed as a questioning of the border. Rather, Narva is seen as a Russian homeland located within the Estonian Republic. The question of graves and homeland requires more research. It would be useful to analyze the importance of graveyards in defining belonging in other Russian communities of the Russian Diaspora or for national minorities within the Russian Federation.

Finally, religion played a definite role in defining the Russian nation since it allowed for the existence of a Russian soul. The belief in a national soul cannot be underestimated. It is the soul that allows the whole to be greater than the sum of its parts; that is to say the nation is more than a group of individuals. It is a body that transcends the material, with a soul presumably bequeathed by God. This soul is, according to informants interviewed in Narva, present in all those individuals belonging to the nation, and it defines the individual. Russians therefore have a national character that is unique. A person thus belongs to a nation because he or she received this national soul at birth. A person therefore cannot escape their nationality, any more than they could change their "race." Continued research in the role of religion in the formation of Russian nationality is necessary to counterbalance the importance too often granted to the state; the formation of nations is both a cultural and a political process.

Though Narva is marked by a strong sense of nationality, this did not cross over into the political realm as there were few signs of overt Russian political nationalism, which in the case of Narva would have meant the desire to create a separate state, or more importantly the desire to separate from Estonia and join another state, the Russian Federation. The information that I gathered during the time I spent in both Narva and Moscow clearly demonstrated that there was never any confusion in terms of national identity: the inhabitants of Narva understood nationality as a primordial essence and a person's nationality remained unchanged even though state structures had radically been transformed. The belief in nationality, for example, did not mean that a person of Russian nationality could not be a citizen of the Estonian Republic while considering their local community a Russian city.

I concede that this view of Russian nationalism contradicts much that has been written with regards to Russian nationalism within Estonia. Two Estonian researchers reported that nationalism is more visible in the northern region where Russians are a local majority (Kirch and Kirch, 1995: 48). This can simply be attributed to the confusion of nationalism and other forms of political mobilization and contestation of state policies. The Russians in Narva are not contesting the legitimacy of the Estonian State; they are demanding to be included in the state. The issue that has mobilized Russian speakers is their citizenship.

Most of the Russians to whom I spoke would welcome the opportunity to become citizens. The fact that many Russians have adopted Russian citizenship should not be interpreted as an act of Russian nationalism. Rather, Russians (and many non-Russians alike) adopted Russian citizenship since it was the most convenient alternative.

Returning to Narva, it is clear that the Russian population is unlikely to be integrated (in the sense of assimilated) quickly or willingly into an Estonian nation. The Russians in Estonia are willing to learn the Estonian language, but not necessarily at the expense of their own language. A concept now in circulation is that of 'cultural autonomy.' Paradoxically, the idea of cultural autonomy originates from the constitution of the first Republic of Estonia. In that constitution, the Estonian Republic had made certain concessions to the non-Estonian populations. The difficulty with cultural autonomy is the relative size of the minority populations. Whereas Estonia prior to World War II was relatively ethnically homogeneous—almost 90% of the population of Estonia was ethnically Estonian—now, Estonia's minorities represent more than a third of the population.

One of the proponents of Russian cultural autonomy is Sergei Isakov, a professor at the University of Tartu and elected member of the Estonian parliament. In his opinion, the Russians in Estonia can be integrated into Estonian society, but not at the expense of their language. The central tenet of cultural autonomy is that the Estonian State recognizes the necessity of financing Russian schools and post-secondary institutions in addition to Russian cultural development in Estonia. Isakov points to the 1925 National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act. This Act provided some guarantees to the minorities of Estonia, but it was far from perfect. The fundamental flaw of that Act was that it did not require the Estonian State to finance the cultural autonomy of its minorities. In Isakov's opinion, the poverty of the Russians in Estonia prevented them from taking advantage of cultural autonomy at that time. It is evident that many Estonian politicians are against any form of effective cultural autonomy for Russians in Estonia today (see D. Smith, 1998: 4-6).

Russian cultural autonomy is simply an expression of the Russians desire for greater equality within the Republic of Estonia. This was clearly stated by one Russian in Narva, who told me "We simply want what the Estonians had in the Soviet Union." What he meant was that the Russians want what the Soviet Union afforded Estonians in the Soviet Union. They had their own schools, universities, theatres, television channels, and every other service imaginable. In the Estonian Russian-language press, Finland was often put forward as an example: it was a bilingual state that offered many services to its Swedish minority. As Anthony D. Smith has recognized, an independent state is not necessary for every nationalist movement, as "Many Catalan, Scots, and Flemish nationalists have been more concerned with home rule and cultural parity in a multinational state than with outright independence" (1991: 74). As noted in the introduction, Smith also put forward the proposition that ethnic aspirations are at most 'communal' in that they seek a controlling voice in their local communities. This is especially true when these minorities have been "largely divorced from any territorial dimensions" (Smith 1991: 149). The Russians in Narva do have a territory, but as noted, the homeland has been defined as the city of Narva, thus producing communal aspirations that are tinged by nationality. As Thompson has noted, ideas of nation and nationality must be understood locally because "notions of nation and national identity are used by people to position themselves in relation to others and how, in turn, such social action is partly responsible for the ongoing perpetuation of the reality of the nation" (2001: 20)

The question of cultural autonomy is, all things considered, a question of economics and identity. It is evident that in the modern global economy access to a quality education is essential to economic success. The Estonian government intends on gradually replacing Russian language instruction with Estonian language instruction in Russian schools. This process would invariably ensure that a large number of Russian speaking students could not successfully complete their high school education, or would be disadvantaged when competing with native Estonian speakers. Educated solely in Estonian, they would likely find it very difficult to succeed in school and would consequently rate poorly in the university qualification exams. This is especially true for Russian students in Narva who have little if any exposure to the Estonian language. The Estonian government believes that such a measure is necessary to integrate Russians into Estonian society, but the reverse is likely true. If Russians are increasingly disadvantaged, becoming a true *lumpenproletariat* with few prospects, it will invariably destabilize Estonian society. Cultural autonomy is simply a way of affirming the Russians desire for a measure of equality.

As a Canadian French speaker, I can certainly empathize with Estonian fears that unless radical measures are taken, the Estonian language will disappear. However, there is little evidence that the Russian language poses a threat to the Estonian language. Estonians are now a majority in an independent state, and unlike the Irish before their independence, few Estonians assimilated during the Soviet period; moreover, unlike the English language in the newly independent Ireland, the Russian language in Estonia is not a prestigious language. Estonian students are no longer obliged to learn the Russian language, and consequently, few young Estonians under the age of 20 speak the Russian language. Rather, most young Estonians want to learn English, Swedish, Finnish or German, rather than Russian. Consequently, the English language poses a greater threat to the Estonian language than does the Russian language.

Also, the threat posed by the Russian minority is overestimated given the relative isolation of the Estonian and Russian speaking communities. Rural Estonia is overwhelmingly Estonian, and Russians predominate in the Northeast, where there are few Estonians. The one place where Russians and Estonians enter into contact on a regular basis is in Tallinn. However, Russians and Estonians in that city have voluntarily segregated themselves (Pettai, 1995). There is little social interaction between Russians and Estonians in Tallinn, which insulates the

Estonian language and culture from the Russian presence. Also, the Russian population is now the minority, which ensures a legitimacy to the Estonian language that is not afforded to the Russian language.

The greatest barrier to the integration of Russians in Estonian society is the disenfranchisement of large numbers of Russian speakers, the so-called "colonists." Estonia cannot be a truly democratic society until this issue is addressed. It is evident that Estonian politicians listen to their electors, but those electors are for the most part Estonian. Consequently, Estonian legislators can afford to pass legislation tinged by Estonian nationalism, since it will please certain constituents. In the name of defending the Estonian people, the Estonian State can adopt laws that discriminate against Russian speakers. If the Estonian legislature were truly representative, then roughly one third of the elected national officials would be Russian speakers and this in itself would temper the nationalistic ardor of Estonian politicians.

In examining the Russians of Narva, I have had the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of identity, ethnicity, and nationalism. I have examined the economic consequences of nationalism; the discourse of defense often masks the emergence of economic inequalities based on nationality. A better understanding of the Russian community in Narva was derived in unexpected places like graveyards and monuments. Finally, I had the opportunity to gaze into the Russian Soul and understand how nationality is used in the everyday agency of individuals. Though the research was conducted in a small city in Estonia, this particular case study can shed light into our understanding of nation and nationality. It demonstrates the importance of understanding how questions of identity and community are defined in the mundane activities of daily life.

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